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Resistance attack Israeli forces in Lebanon

MARIYOUN (AP) — Guerrillas on Sunday set off a pair of roadside bombs that blasted military patrols belonging to Israeli forces and their allied militia in South Lebanon. Two soldiers were injured. In the first attack, a remote-controlled bomb ripped through a three-vehicle Israeli armoured patrol near the village of Reihan at 9 a.m. (0600 GMT), according to security sources in South Lebanon. Seconds later, the guerrillas fired three armoured personnel carriers were shrouded in smoke after it took a direct hit and medical teams were seen treating wounded men on the spot, the security sources said. However, the Israeli military said its only casualty in that attack was one soldier who suffered light wounds. The security sources said the bombing occurred on a road near Reihan village in the central sector of a South Lebanon border enclave Israel occupies.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي

Clinton invites Mubarak for talks

LAS VEGAS (R) — President Bill Clinton called Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Sunday and invited him to Washington next month to discuss Middle East developments following the election of a new right-wing Israeli leader. White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Mr. McCurry told reporters that Mr. Clinton made the call while flying aboard Air Force One from Washington to Las Vegas, Nevada for a campaign appearance. He said Mr. Clinton and Mr. Mubarak had discussed meetings among Arab leaders in Cairo this weekend to chart strategy following the election of Benjamin Netanyahu as Israel's next prime minister. "The policies that the new Israeli government pursues will define the attitudes that many governments have about the peace process in the Arab World," said Mr. McCurry, summing up the sense of the conversation between the two leaders. "No one will rush to judgment prior to the formation of a government, prior to the articulation of policies." Mr. McCurry said Mr. Mubarak indicated some satisfaction with Mr. Netanyahu's recent conciliatory statements about the peace process.

Arabs prepare summit amid warnings to Israel

Qatar says it would revise position on ties if peace process is set back

Mubarak invites all Arab leaders to Cairo summit except those of Iraq and Sudan

Combined agency dispatches
ARAB LEADERS forged ahead Sunday with plans to hold their first full summit in six years, amid warnings of a return to violence if Israel's new right-wing leader moves to disrupt the Middle East peace process.
Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasssem Ben Jaber Al Thani for the first time threatened to freeze fledgling ties with Israel if the Jewish state drags its feet over the peace process.
"Qatar will revise its position" on normalising ties with Israel "if the attitude of the Jewish state changes or if this country begins to stall" over the Arab-Israeli peace process, Sheikh Hamad told journalists Sunday as he arrived in Damascus for talks.
Qatar and Oman are the only two Gulf Arab states to have begun moves to normalise relations with Israel, with

Israel officials currently in Doha to open a commercial representation office.
Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Sunday telephoned the leaders of all Arab governments except Iraq and Sudan to attend the historic gathering in Cairo from June 21 to 23, officials said.
King Hussein, who hosted one of last week's three preliminary meetings of Arab leaders, was the first to announce he would attend the Cairo summit.
Mr. Arafat, his aspirations jeopardised by Israeli Premier-elect Benjamin Netanyahu's opposition to a Palestinian state, welcomed his invitation and lauded the Damascus meeting for backing Palestinian and Arab rights.
Egyptian newspapers said Mr. Mubarak contacted King Hussein and the Monarch

Jordan backs collective Arab action based on all-embracing approach

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Sunday that Jordan supports the consolidation of collective Arab action on the basis of a comprehensive outlook that takes into consideration the particularities and priorities of all Arab states.
The Crown Prince, in comments carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Jordan sees the Arab summit which will be held in Cairo on June 21-23 as a move to support the peace process. The Kingdom believes that all countries of the region, including Iran and Turkey, must contribute to that process, he said.
The call for the summit was issued Saturday by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria after a mini-summit attended by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad held in Damascus.
His Majesty King Hussein said he had accepted the invitation to attend the summit.
Prince Hassan expressed hope that the Cairo summit would tackle the issue of "comprehensive security" in the region, including the security of the Arab Gulf

King and Queen arrive in Washington

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor arrived here Sunday on a working visit to Washington for talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton and senior U.S. officials.
King Hussein and Queen Noor were received upon arrival at Andrews Air Base by senior U.S. officials, the Jordanian ambassador in Washington and senior embassy staff.

In Southboro, Massachusetts, King Hussein, attending His Royal Highness Prince Hashem's ninth-grade graduation, said Saturday he was optimistic about peace prospects in the Middle East and pledged to work with Israeli Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu.
King Hussein, who attended the ceremony

with Queen Noor, and other family members, presented a diploma to Prince Hashem, and was the speaker at the Fay school graduation.
Following the ceremony at the private school, King Hussein said he thinks Mr. Netanyahu is committed to achieving peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians.
"Of course I am optimistic about the peace process and the future of the region," he said. "The people have chosen the prime minister, and I will do everything possible to help him with the peace process."

King Hussein said the new Israeli prime minister will be among several topics he will discuss with President Clinton on Thursday in Washington.



A Jordanian offers sweets to an Israeli family on their arrival in Amman following the first bus service between the two countries June 9. Israel and Jordan on Saturday launched direct public bus shuttles between major cities under their 1994 peace treaty after a month-long delay caused by technical snags (Reuters photo)

Main points on agenda for summit in Cairo

THE ARAB summit in Cairo on June 21-23 will look at reestablishing Arab unity, Arab security arrangements and the commitment of Arab countries to a fair and lasting peace in the Middle East, an Egyptian Foreign Ministry official said Sunday.
He said the main issues on the agenda were:
— "The launch of an intensive programme to reestablish Arab solidarity and to preserve the higher interests of the Arab Nation."

— "The total commitment of Arabs to the acceptance of a fair and lasting peace conforming to the principles of the 1991 Madrid conference on peace in the Middle East — U.N. resolutions 242, 338

and 425 and the principle of land for peace which would in particular allow the Palestinians the right to self-determination and to establish an independent state."

— "The examination of different approaches to setting up Arab security arrangements taking into account changes in the region" — a reference to the recent Israeli-Turkish military accord which alarmed many Arab governments.
Egyptian officials said that "intensive negotiations were taking place at the moment between Egypt and several Arab countries with a view to drawing up a final list of subjects to be discussed at the summit."

Arabs reject Netanyahu call for new Madrid conference, Egypt affirms

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt said Sunday the Arab World rejected a call by Israel's new right-wing prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to hold a second Middle East peace conference similar to the 1991 meeting in Madrid.
"The Arabs dismiss any Israeli offer to hold a Madrid conference II. Why does Netanyahu want a new conference? If it is to change the terms of reference of the peace process, that is unacceptable and nobody can do that," Osama Al Baz, political adviser to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, told journalists.

The Madrid conference launched the Israeli-Arab peace process in 1991.
"The terms of reference agreed at Madrid stipulate the establishment of a just, global and lasting peace based on U.N. resolution 242, 338 and 425 as well as the principle of land for peace," said Mr. Baz.
Dr. Baz, who is also a senior foreign ministry official.
"Before the Israelis talk about any alternative formula... they must affirm their commitment to the framework of the Madrid conference in 1991, on which

there is no going back," he added.
"The Arabs reject any New Israeli proposal on holding a second Madrid conference... the Arabs will not accept any change to the Madrid 1991 framework because it is on that basis that steps have been achieved in the peace process and we cannot stop halfway along the road," he said.
Dr. Baz did not say what the Arabs would do if Israel did try to change the rules and peace talks then came to a standstill.

Baghdad decries its exclusion

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The newspaper of President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday strongly criticised Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia on Sunday for excluding Iraq from an Arab summit due to be held in Cairo from June 21.
"The ingenuity of the 'new Arab wisdom' has led to the calling for an Arab summit in Cairo excluding Iraq to please America, Saudi Arabia, Gulf states and even Israel itself," Babel said in the first Iraqi reaction to the summit.
The last major summit of Arab leaders was held in 1990 in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
Babel said the Damascus meeting and earlier talks in Jordan should not be a substitute for previous calls by Arab leaders for reconciliation among Arabs which had vanished following the election of hardline Benjamin Netanyahu as Israel's next prime minister on May 29.
"After the fall of (Shimon) Peres in the Israeli elections calls for Arab reconciliation and solidarity vanished and instead smaller summits were held to protect (rulers') chairs and avoid embarrassment to their peoples," Babel said in a front-page editorial.
Iraq's Culture and Information Minister Abdul Ghafur, in an article in the ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra, urged solidarity of Arab ranks, including Baghdad, to counter what he described as a rush by some Arab leaders "to please Netanyahu, Peres in addition to Washington."

Netanyahu silent on Arab summit but Likud aides maintain hardline

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's new right-wing leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, refused Sunday to enter into a war of words with Arab leaders who have called an emergency summit meeting in response to his election victory.
"Netanyahu will not react until he has formed his government," said his spokesman, Shai Bazak, a day after leaders of Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia called an Arab summit for June 21-23 in Cairo.
"He doesn't want to get involved in a verbal ping-pong match with the Arab states by making a lot of public declarations," Mr. Bazak said.
He stressed that since Mr. Netanyahu's May 29 victory over Labour Prime Minister Shimon Peres, the Likud Party leader "has on numerous

occasions committed himself to pursuing the peace process."
Israeli President Ezer Weizman said Arab states should refrain from prejudging Mr. Netanyahu's peace policies before the prime minister-elect forms his new government.
"I think it is not so wise that they are already starting to set down their positions before the new government (is formed) and the prime minister-elect expresses his opinion," Mr. Weizman told reporters during a tour of northern Israel.
"I am requesting that Egypt and Jordan, Egypt especially, lead in the right way and not the easy way," Mr. Weizman said. "If the elections have led them to stronger unity then apparently something worries them."


Members of his Likud party said Mr. Netanyahu will stick to a hardline course on peace, defying Arab leaders trying to force him to make "concessions."
They played down the statement by the leaders of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria in Damascus on Saturday that any Israeli backtracking on peace threatened to plunge the Middle East into violence.
As the 46-year-old Netanyahu held his fire, other top Likud members insisted there was no need to be "excited" or "frightened" by Arab alarm.
Arab leaders are "stunned and surprised and perhaps also shocked that it was made clear to them the public in Israel chose to be led by a new prime minister," Jerusalem's Israel mayor, Ehud

Palestinians want freezing of Arab contacts with Israel

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Leading Palestinians Sunday urged the upcoming Arab summit in Cairo to order a freeze on normalising Arab-Israeli relations until Israel's new right-wing government state proves its commitment to peace.
"The Arab World must stop all economic and diplomatic overtures towards Israel until it recognises the Palestinian people's right to self-determination," said Haider Abdul Shafi, a member of the legislative council.
Hanan Ashrawi, chairwoman of the council's political affairs committee, agreed that the suspension of the normalisation process "is needed to counter any move by Israel to adopt a position in contradiction to the principles of the peace process and the rights of Arabs and Palestinians."
"Since the normalisation was hasty, we urgently need a

pause to study the new situation," said the former Palestinian spokeswoman to the peace talks.
The June 21-23 summit in Cairo was called over the weekend by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria to build a common Arab stand following the election in Israel of right-wing leader Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister.
While Mr. Netanyahu has yet to form a government or issue policy guidelines for his administration, Arab and Palestinian leaders have been alarmed by reports his programme will rule out the creation of a Palestinian state or any return of the occupied Golan Heights to Syria and back the expansion of Jewish settlement activity in the occupied territories.
A Saudi-Egyptian-Syrian declaration made on Sunday made no call for a freeze or

On the Occasion of the
Anniversary of The Great
Arab Revolt and Army Day



ARAB BANK

has the honour to convey to
HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN
and to the Jordanian People
Its felicitations and best wishes

Embargo cripples Iraqi economy, brings suffering but Saddam stays in power

By Acil Tabbara
Agence France Presse

BAGHDAD — Six years of U.N. sanctions have crippled the Iraqi economy, brought severe malnutrition and cut the country off from the world but failed to shake President Saddam Hussein's hold on power.

The limited quantity of oil Iraq is allowed to export under the humanitarian exemption agreed last month with the U.N. will allow it to buy food and medicine, but lead to little economic improvement, officials and diplomats said.

Iraq used to derive more than 90 per cent of its revenues from oil but has seen its economy collapse gradually since sanctions were imposed after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

The Association of Iraqi Industrialists said 90 per cent of the factories no longer function for lack of spare parts and raw materials which cannot be imported under the sanctions.

The authorities have done everything to boost agriculture which was given less emphasis during the heyday of the oil years when Iraq was able to import most of its food needs.

But Iraq can only meet 30 per cent of its own food needs with production of 2.5 million tonnes of grain annually, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said.

The dollar which was worth \$3 in the 1980s trades today at around 900 to the dollar, as the authorities have been forced to

allow a free market which functions on rumour and speculation.

Government employees, who account for the bulk of wage earners, work virtually for free and transportation costs alone exceed their income. The average monthly salary of 3,000 dinars (around \$4) allows them to buy six kilograms of sugar.

Food rationed by the government provides only 1,200 calories daily, which is "enough only to prevent people from dying of hunger," according to Subash Dasgupta, an official with the UNICEF programme here.

Iraqis can survive 10 days on these rations but must obtain the rest of what they need at the often prohibitive prices of the free market.

"The situation is very bad. Malnutrition among the children is increasing," the UNICEF official said, adding it "is comparable to underdeveloped African countries like Ghana or Mali, even though Iraq was once an abundant country."

The FAO said around four million of Iraq's 20 million people are in danger of malnutrition, especially children. U.N. officials say around 500,000 children have died as a result of the sanctions.

No longer does the state provide for all its citizens' needs.

Beggars accost motorists at Baghdad intersections, students sell newspapers, engineers sell packs of cigarettes, and mothers work as housemaids.

Many students have abandoned their studies because they cannot

afford the cost of supplies, even though enrollment at universities is free.

A brain drain has occurred even though the authorities discourage emigration and have given no figures. Around 20 per cent of the professors are estimated to have left Baghdad University.

The country's infrastructure is in dire shape.

"We need to repair the hospitals, purify the water, re-establish electricity" which is interrupted more and more, said Mohammad Zejjari, the coordinator of U.N. programmes in Iraq.

The embargo has deepened the isolation of the Iraqi leadership, undermining its ability to assess the extent of international opposition to lifting the embargo, diplomats here said.

Iraq for years rejected an oil-for-food deal as it held out for a full lifting of the embargo, which depends mainly on whether Baghdad satisfies U.N. demands for dismantling its weapons of mass destruction.

But the embargo has not shaken President Saddam's grip on power. The government, which distributes the ration cards and provides free but limited medical care, is still the only recourse for Iraqis.

After the insurrection of March 1991 which was repressed in bloodshed, "people prefer to die murdered in their beds than revolt," a Western diplomat said.

LAND SEIZURE

A Palestinian farmer with his hoe on Sunday stands in his field which was taken by settlers as Israeli soldiers guard over a small Palestinian demonstration in the town of Salbit against the confiscation of land. Palestinians claim some 1000 dunums of land has been fenced off by Israeli settlers near the West Bank settlement of Ariel. The fence can be seen at top of photo (Reuters photo)



U.N. conference shifts focus briefly to cities at war

ISTANBUL (AP) — When the Palestinians took control of Gaza City two years ago, the city was black because the Israelis had painted buildings with black tar to prevent them from being used as message boards. Today, it is colorful again but life is far from normal.

After five years of civil war in Sierra Leone, hundreds of thousands of bumpy refugees are wandering the streets of the capital, Freetown. They have no place to live, no jobs and some are dying of starvation.

Beirut is being rebuilt from the ashes of civil war. But the old downtown centre, which was traditionally the meeting point for Christians and Muslims has been deliberately destroyed — and some fear that hopes for real reunification have been destroyed with it.

From Kuwait City to Sarajevo, the list of cities and towns ravaged by war gets longer every year. Right now, fighting is ripping apart the fabric of urban life in Liberia, Chechnya and Afghanistan.

At the U.N. conference on cities, participants shifted their focus for one hour Friday from the problems of cities at peace to the chaotic nightmare of cities at war — and the challenges they face in trying to rebuild.

Florence Dillsworth, mayor of Freetown, said the war has destroyed about half the country and created acute overcrowding in Freetown and other big towns. Water and sanitation are inadequate and children lucky enough to attend school sometimes have 150 youngsters in their class.

"Four years ago the population of Freetown was 110,000. Now it is 1.5 million, and we have not added to the facilities that we had some five years ago," Ms. Dillsworth said.

The top priority of the country's recently elected civilian government, the first in 20 years, is rehabilitation and reconstruction. "We need every help we can get — but we do not have the resources," Ms. Dillsworth said.

The mayor called on the U.N. conference to set up mechanisms to resolve con-

flicts and assist war-ravaged countries.

"I think it is incumbent on the developed cities, the richer cities, to stretch out the hand to help us to begin again," she said.

Mayor Awn Shawa of Gaza City also called for additional resources to finance reconstruction.

As soon as the Palestinians took control of Gaza City two years ago, he said, they started making emergency repairs to vital services such as roads and the sewage system.

"I visited some districts in the Gaza Strip where sewage flow went into homes — the bedrooms of the people," he said.

The mayor blamed the Israelis for "deliberate negligence" of all infrastructure during their 27 years in control of the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

"In other respects Gaza was a destroyed city and still is," Mr. Shawa said. "I think we are on the way, but we need time and we need resources."

Many industrialised nations have been reluctant to finance reconstruction in

war-torn countries, partly out of concern that fighting may break out again.

Clovis Maksoud, director of the Centre for the Study of the Global South at American University in Washington, which sponsored Friday's session, said it is in the industrialised North's interest to promote peace in the developing South because it would create new markets.

In Beirut, it is not resources that are the problem but the reconstruction plan being implemented by Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, said Assem Salaam, president of the Lebanese Institute of Architects and Engineers.

He blamed Mr. Hariri, a property developer, for demolishing much of Beirut's medieval sector and 19th century Ottoman quarter in 1983 and 1992, and for ignoring a plan that would have kept the historic centre of the city where all trades, professions and religions mixed.

Its elimination, Mr. Salaam said, has dealt "a deadly blow" to reunification.

Egyptian journalists in crisis talks

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian journalists have called a crisis general assembly for Wednesday to coordinate a response to draft legislation now before parliament, which they say fails to remove tight restrictions on press freedom.

Parliament began the first reading of an amended law on the press which will replace one introduced in May last year which imposed up to 15 years jail for journalists found guilty of defamation.

However, Yahya Qallash, a leader of the journalists' trade union, said that the draft bill "does not meet even the minimum standards" called for at the union's general assemblies since May last year.

He said the union wanted amendments to 19 articles of the draft bill, which the government agreed to draw up in response to the storm of protest triggered by the May 1995 legislation.

Mr. Qallash said the journalists' assembly had initially been scheduled for June 23, but had been brought forward because the last reading of the bill is due to take place on June 15. According to the Human Rights Legal Aid Centre, the new bill cuts the maximum sentence for defamation but increases penalties for 22 other offences.

It notably calls for five years imprisonment for "inciting a coup d'etat, hatred of the regime or spreading doctrines aimed at modifying the principles of the constitution."

A journalist can be jailed for up to three years for "publishing pictures harmful to the country's reputation" and for one year for "insulting an official in the course of his duties, or insulting parliament or official bodies."

Union leader Ibrahim Nafie, the editor of Al-Ahram who is considered close to President Hosni Mubarak, said he would spare no effort to have these articles amended.

'Green line' shooting underlines Cyprus tension

By Michele Kambas
Reuters

NICOSIA — Teenaged soldiers, many of them barely out of secondary school, lurk in watchtowers stacked with sandbags and festooned with rival flags sprouting on a skyline of minarets, deserted buildings and churches.

At some places in Nicosia, the divided capital of Cyprus, forces from the opposing Turkish and Greek sides are just a few metres away from one another in a deserted area of the capital where time has stood still since 1974.

An abandoned brothel known as "Maria's house," a car showroom filled with 1974 models and a battered old Morris Minor, dubbed the "yellow car" but now whitened with time, are landmarks of a United Nations-patrolled "green line" which slices through the city.

Occasionally four-letter words break the silence, mouthed by soldiers towards their khaki-clad adversaries in the sentry post opposite in a distinctive cockney accent. Both sides have conscripts in their ranks from the large Cypriot community in London.

"Yeah, we always get stuck with the dangerous places," one grumbled. Nearly 22 years after a Turkish invasion sparked by a short-lived coup in Nicosia engineered by the military junta ruling Greece, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island still live apart.

Some 30,000 Turkish troops are stationed in the northern part of the island. The government-controlled areas in the south have a conscript force of about 10,000.

The ceasefire that has existed since the invasion is occasionally broken. The most recent incident was the killing of a Greek Cypriot national guardsmen by a Turkish Cypriot soldier on June 3.

It was the "first green line" fatality in three years. Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş described the incident as "saddening" but said the Greek Cypriot soldier ignored calls by Turkish troops to halt. Greek Cypriots said he was killed "in cold blood."

"It is just an indication of how tense things are and how easily something could go wrong," said one diplomat.

High-level agreements reached by the leaders of the two sides more than 15 years ago state the island should be reunited under a federal umbrella as a bicommunal, bizonal state.

But after that any progress on what has become known as the Cyprus problem ground to a halt, remaining a source of tension between NATO allies Greece and Turkey, who are also guarantor powers with Britain of Cyprus' 1960 independence agreement.

Nobody has been able to come up with the magic formula which would be agreeable to the two sides. "In a way there has been an agreement on the substance (of the problem), but details of how it is going to work and how it is going to be achieved haven't," a Western diplomat said.

"Security is of paramount importance to both sides. If there is an agreement on that everything else will come a lot easier."

Turkish Cypriots want an independent contingent of the Turkish army stationed on the island in the event of a settlement, with intervention rights. The Cypriot government dismisses any suggestion of such rights, proposing the deployment of a multi-national force to the island.

And the United Nations, stretching its 1,200 men to cover the 180 kilometres dividing line from east to west, says it cannot guarantee there will not be violations of the status quo in areas they do not permanently patrol.

The force is ostensibly on a mandate renewed every six months but it has been permanently stationed here since the outbreak of intercommunal violence in 1964.

It was helpless to prevent the Turkish invasion 10

Lebanon finds treasure in Roman sarcophagus

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese archaeologists have unearthed a Roman sarcophagus in the ancient city of Baalbek containing the gold-laden body of a teenage woman.

The 18-year-old girl, apparently from a wealthy family, had a gold necklace around her neck, a gold head band and thin layers of gold covering her features.

"The burial necklace is made of 53 wafer-thin golden pieces, each of the shape of a grape leaf. Two oval-shaped golden layers covered the eyes, a rectangular one covered the nose and two thin pieces covered the lips," said Tawfiq Al Rifai, head of the archaeology department at Lebanon's directorate of antiquities.

Beside the body, eight unique tiny masks, one representing Jupiter, were found in an almost intact condition.

"These masks are very rare. They served as icons for exorcism," Mr. Rifai told Reuters.

Also found around the body were nine glass perfume bottles and lacrimatories which held the tears of the people burying the dead. They are all in good condition, Mr. Rifai said.

He said the stone coffin, dating back to the 3rd or 4th century A.D., appeared as infrastructure work was carried out in Baalbek, the city of the massive Roman temples of Jupiter and Bacchus, Lebanon's most renowned monuments.

Culture and Higher Education Minister Michel Edde called the discovery "exceptional."

"This is an incident of great importance and of great archaeological value. It is the first time we find a complete sarcophagus with all its contents," Mr. Edde was quoted by the official National News Agency as saying.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 Bonkers (cartoon)
15:25 Richie Rich
15:55 Playhouse
16:00 Animals of the Mediterranean
16:35 Susan 'Loose
17:00 News flash
17:02 Ordy
17:15 L'Ecole Des Fans
18:00 Magazine - Thalassa
18:30 1996 European Championship: The Netherlands vs. Scotland
19:15 News in French
19:30 News in English
20:25 Second Half
20:55 Rock Around the World (Music)
21:20 Daily Summary - Japan Week
21:30 1996 European Champions: Romania vs. France
22:15 News in English
22:30 Second Half
23:20 The Bold and the Beautiful

PRAYER TIMES

6:55 Sunrise
12:35 Dhuhr
16:15 Asr
19:45 Maghrib
20:19 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 62785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624940
Latin Catholics Church Tel. 614190
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675991
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Relative warm weather conditions will prevail with temperatures above average and winds easterly light to moderate. In Aqaba, it will be warm, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN: Dr. Adnan Zaghloul 898140
Dr. Fakher Al-Baladi 663412
Dr. Fayez Dabbas 759155
Dr. Khalil Abu Marjoun 779797
Perdons pharmacy 776336
Al Aquma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636731
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637661
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Adnan Zaghloul 898140
Dr. Fakher Al-Baladi 663412
Dr. Fayez Dabbas 759155
Dr. Khalil Abu Marjoun 779797
Perdons pharmacy 776336
Al Aquma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636731
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637661
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 627777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630521
Hotel Complaints 668001
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661181
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

HOSPITALS

AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 81381/332
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 642411/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2
Jahel Amman Maternity 642362
Malhus, J. Amman 636141
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 609131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musader Hospital 627279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Arrey, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Amal Hospital 607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information departments at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)533001, 5 and Marka Airport Tel. 875311/5 where it should always be verified.
ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
08:15 Sunae (RJ)
09:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
10:10 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:30 Beirut (RJ)
10:50 New Delhi (RJ)
17:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
19:00 Bangkok (RJ)
23:25 Casablanca (RJ)
04:10 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
10:45 Khartoum (SD)
10:50 Cairo (MS)

ROYAL WINGS (RW) Flights

04:30 Jeddah (RJ)
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
11:00 Casablanca (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:15 London (RJ)
13:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
22:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:45 Sunae (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
04:30 Jeddah (RJ)
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
11:00 Casablanca (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:15 London (RJ)
13:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
22:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:45 Sunae (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
10:45 Khartoum (SD)
10:50 Cairo (MS)

ROYAL WINGS (RW) Flights

04:30 Jeddah (RJ)
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
11:00 Casablanca (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:15 London (RJ)
13:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
22:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:45 Sunae (RJ)

HUJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:10 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:10 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apricot 880 / 600
Apple 700 / 600
Banana 600 / 600
Banana (Mukammal) 520 / 520
Banana (imported) 750 / 500
Cabbage 180 / 100
Carrot 80 / 40
Cauliflower 180 / 140
Cucumber (large) 100 / 70
Cucumber (small) 160 / 100
Eggplant 240 / 150
Garlic 600 / 400
Garlic (green) 270 / 100
Lemon 600 / 450
Marrow (large) 150 / 100
Marrow (small) 240 / 150
Mulukhiyah 170 / 110
Onion (dry) 120 / 80
Okra 150 / 80
Orange 370 / 250
Peach 600 / 450
Pepper (hot) 360 / 260
Pepper (sweet) 420 / 200
Potato 360 / 160
Spring Bean 510 / 360
Tomato 140 / 90
Watermelon 120 / 80

EURO-Islam conference opens at AL al-Bayt University

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A four-day interfaith conference opens today at Al al-Bayt University in Jordan's northernmost governorate of Al Mafraq. Entitled "Relations between the Muslim World and Europe," the conference features participation by specialists from most countries of the Muslim World, as well as from Western Europe.

According to a statement issued by the university, the conference will be held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and will be organized in cooperation with the University of Lund, the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at the University of Uppsala, and the Swedish Institute, Stockholm, Sweden.

The statement added that the conference's central focus will be on how to jointly promote mutual and correct knowledge and respect for each other by means of what may be called confidence-building measures in the cultural sphere.

The upcoming deliberations will include general discussions, scholarly exchange, identification of research areas, etc. Collectively, they will endeavour to address the four main issues of stereotype-combating, analysis of the functions and products of societal "opinion-makers," promotion of more harmonious coexistence between Muslims and Westerners and the examination of the perception of Muslim societies of the European models of democracy, justice, humanism and gender.

Confirmed participants

include scholars from Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Switzerland, U.K., Sweden, Pakistan, Tunisia, Iran, India, Indonesia, Denmark, Russia, Germany, among others.

In a memorandum accompanying the invitation to Al al-Bayt conference, it is stated that "in today's world where ongoing tensions and conflicts plague many regions, cultural and religious aspects of our relationships have grown in. Notwithstanding ever broader contacts and increasing interdependence, misunderstanding, prejudice and distrust are still prevalent between the Muslim world and the West."

"In Europe, the Muslim world and Muslims are often depicted as a fanatical and uncontrollable mass, an image conjured by deep ignorance, and

also supported by some extreme manifestations within Islam," the statement said. In the Islamic world, it said, "many view Western civilisation from the perspective of painful experiences of the crusades and colonialism and (more recently), of the cruelties perpetrated in Bosnia."

The statement said the diversity of the cultures and countries represented to the conference as well as the participants' "high level of scholarly aptitude are expected to collaborate to provide for a rich and illuminating discussion-forum."

The statement added that participants are "invited in their personal, academic capacities, and no governmental representation has been sought."

Fuheis, Mahes residents stage sit-in to demand action against pollution

Khatib: factory working to improve 'environmental performance'

By Mervat Suwadeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than 800 residents of the cities of Fuheis and Mahes staged a sit-in Sunday to press their demands for a "final solution" to the problem of pollution which they say the cement factory is causing in the two cities.

During the sit-in, in which children and students participated, the city residents demanded a gradual shut down of the cement factory production lines and raising a fund to finance solving the problems of open mining, explosions to break up the cement rock and water pollution. They also called for putting an end to "the company's efforts to close a circular road which serves farmers to the area."

"We have been suffering for more than 40 years,"

said Fakhri Sumeirat, president of the Fuheis branch of the Jordan Environment Society. "We have a problem with the cement dust, with the noise of the trucks. We need a permanent solution to these problems," he told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Sumeirat, who is also a resident of Fuheis, said there was an increasing number of asthma cases among the children of the city because of the cement dust.

"You can ask doctors in the city, parents, teachers. Children are the ones that are most affected by the city's polluted air," Mr. Sumeirat maintained.

But General Manager at the Cement factory Abdul Ilah Al Khatib rejected the residents' charges, saying that pollution levels in Fuheis were not higher than any other city in the Kingdom and stressed that the

factory has already launched a plan to improve "its environmental performance."

"The cement factory in Fuheis is not the only cement plant in the world that is built close to residential areas and studies that were conducted by independent research centres prove that the pollution level in Fuheis is acceptable according to international standards," Mr. Khatib argued.

He stressed that the factory has allocated JD 24 million to upgrade its production lines in line with His Majesty's king Hussein instructions to solve the pollution problem in Fuheis.

"We suspended the fifth production line last April and we expect to finish upgrading it by the end of the year," Mr. Al Khatib said. "The other main line

will be upgraded next year. Our plan is to have all our lines upgraded by 1998," he told the Jordan Times.

However, Fuheis residents demand that the factory go beyond upgrading its furnaces to halting expansion plans in the city which they say "have had enough of polluted air."

"The factory has bought new land in Fuheis which indicates plans for expansion," said Fawzi Tuqine, a parliament member and a resident of Fuheis.

But Minister of Environmental Affairs, Abdul Razaq Tubeishat, asserted that the ministry would not allow any expansion for factory premises in Fuheis.

"Yes, there is pollution in Fuheis, but the factory has been responsive to our demands and since it began to upgrade its production lines we should wait and see," Dr. Tubeishat said.

Study highlights obstacles to growth of tourism, points to needs for developing infrastructure

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Over-emphasis on antiquities as the only tourism resource, poor presentation of tourism attractions and below-standard quality of services and facilities provision are the major plagues affecting Jordan's tourism industry and constraining tourism development, according to a study for a tourism development plan in the Kingdom conducted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The study, which was presented yesterday in a seminar on tourism organised within the framework of the Japan Week in Jordan, stressed the need for developing tourism products from the perspective of foreign tourists and improving visitors facilities as "an integral part of tourist services, which play the key role in enhancing the level of visitor's experience and satisfaction."

"The brochures published by the Ministry of Tourism," for example, "highlight the Jordan Valley as a natural tourist resource," member of the

JICA study team for the tourism development plan in Jordan Kiyooki Takakuwa said at the seminar. But while the valley may be attractive to native Jordanians or visitors from Gulf countries, it might have little appeal for Europeans or Asians whose countries have an abundance of green scenery, he said.

Stressing that marketing strategies should incorporate themes that appeal to the targeted tourists, Mr. Takakuwa, who is also member of the Pacific Asia Travel Association, said tourism is a fiercely competitive market and natural endowments are not enough to attract tourists.

"The simple fact that (Jordan) is endowed with world-class tourist resources such as Petra does not necessarily guarantee (Jordan) a position of world-class tourist destination in the global tourist market," he said.

Mr. Takakuwa said that Jordan needs to develop the infrastructure necessary for the growth of tourism industry.

"The lack of modern visitor facilities, such as signs

and trails, handy on-site maps and free information leaflets, visitor centres and transparency of guide fees is conspicuous," Mr. Takakuwa pointed out.

The JICA study, financed by the Japanese government and carried out between December 1994 and March 1996 was submitted to the government very recently, Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism Akram Masarweh said.

He said the Ministry of Tourism, together with other concerned institutions, is taking steps to implement the recommendations of this study.

The seminar, held at the Amman Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by the Jordanian and Japanese National Committees for the Japan Week in Jordan in cooperation with the Jordan Society of Tourist and Travel Agents (JSTTA), aimed at "increasing tourism production and development," JSTTA president Lam'i Haddadin said.

According to the JICA study, 80 per cent of tourists to Jordan are Europeans, and 78 per cent of them come to the country

for "cultural reasons."

But Mr. Takakuwa said these tourists are not provided with information on the sites which they visit.

Additionally, "spectacular topographical features or beautiful natural landscapes are neglected," Mr. Takakuwa told the Jordan Times, citing as examples Wadi Mujib and Petra itself.

He added that "the first and lasting impression of a tourist destination is often formed at its gateway, the airport and its access," and "what we call, 'sense of arrival' is essential in the formation of a tourist destination image."

Mr. Takakuwa said that while capital can be made available for investment in the tourism sector in the Kingdom, the perspective from which international tourism is approached must be changed.

"Investors, capital and expertise can be supplied," Mr. Takakuwa told the Jordan Times, but "the perspective from which to look at international tourism needs to be changed," if tourism is to become the "oil of Jordan."

Princess Ghida lays foundation stone for new Lebanese embassy building

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Princess Ghida Talal, honorary president of the newly founded Jordanian-Lebanese Association, yesterday laid the foundation stone for the new building of the Lebanese embassy in Amman and patronised the association's inaugural gala dinner.

The Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan, William Habib, was on hand to receive the Princess at the location in Abdoun of the new embassy which is currently situated on Jebel Amman's Second Circle. HRH Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammed accompanied the Princess to the dinner, which was attended by HRH Prince and Mrs. Zeid Ben Shaker, Prime Minister and Mrs. Abdul Karim Kabariti, Senator Leila Sharaf, Ambassador Habib and several cabinet ministers as well as prominent members of the Jordanian and the Lebanese communities.

The aim of the 200-



HRH Princess Ghida Talal

member association is to strengthen and promote Jordanian-Lebanese cultural, economic and tourist relations. The association plans to hold joint cultural activities to strengthen the existing strong ties between the two peoples and to encourage tourism between the two countries.

Kabariti urges review of health care system

AMMAN (Peirs) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Sunday urged the Ministry of Health to reexamine the present state-sponsored health insurance scheme with a view to covering a wider sector of the population.

Only government employees and their dependants are covered by the current insurance plan which entitles them to benefit from almost free medical treatment offered by government-run hospitals and health centres.

Addressing a meeting during a visit to the Ministry of Health attended by Health Minister Aref Bataineh and senior ministry staff, Mr. Kabariti said that the Social Security Corporation (SSC) can be involved in designing a more efficient health insurance system that can cover more segments of the population.

A new health insurance plan should also provide for a new fee for such services, with the needy groups getting totally free medical services, he added. He said that the new system should cover new age groups like children under the age of six.

The Prime Minister was briefed by ministry staff on the health insurance

scheme in force, alternative plans, cost of a new and a larger system and the groups that are entitled to benefit from it. A study prepared by the Ministry of Health showed that 7.9 per cent of the Gross National Product is spent on the health sector, which is a very high rate matching those in the United Kingdom and Japan.

The study also pointed out that the public sector is supposed to cover the cost of medical treatment of nearly 80 per cent of the population with the rest to be covered by the private sector.

Also Sunday, the Prime Minister visited the Central Tenders Department where he met its Director General Naser Madadha who outlined the main duties of his department.

In discussing the system of purchases and tenders, the Prime Minister requested that these follow a unified method in all government departments. He said that closer cooperation should be maintained between the Central Tenders Department and the various government offices in Jordan.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

"Accompagnatrice" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

JAPAN WEEK

Lecture: "Japan's Economic Development: Some Observations on the Role of the Government" by Mr. Arisato Okumura at Said Al Mufli Auditorium, Faculty of Engineering, the University of Jordan (10:11-11:00 a.m.)

Seminar: "The Status of Women in Japan and Jordan" at the Royal Cultural Centre (11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)

Japanese Arts Exhibitions at the Royal Cultural Centre (1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.)

Broadcasting of Japanese TV programmes and films on Jordan television.

JAZZ FESTIVAL

Performance by Spanish jazz band Tete Montoliu at the Roman Amphitheatre at 9:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

Photography exhibit by American photographer George Eastman titled "Passage Across the Jordan" at the American Center, until June 23.

Works by Rafic Majzoub at the French Cultural Centre, until June 27.

Paintings by artist Issam Tantawi at Beladina Art Gallery, Gardens Street, until June 14.

Works by Ahmad Nawash at the Jordan Plastic Arts Association, Jabbal Weibdeh, until June 29.

Works by Ayman Nimer at Darat Al Fann, until June 12.

Baghdad decries its exclusion

(Continued from page 1)

"It is a call for logic. It is a call for a comprehensive Arab gathering ... to face joint threats," Mr. Abdul Ghafur said.

Key Gulf Arab states meanwhile insisted on banning Iraq from attending the Cairo Summit, Arab diplomats said.

"Iraq's presence was out of the question ... there are too many sensitivities," said a senior Arab diplomat. "I think some Gulf states would not attend the summit if Iraq or Saddam (Hussein) were invited."

"There are varying degrees of objections but some (Gulf states) insisted on it (Iraq's banning from the summit). They say the time is not right yet to sit with Iraq," said a Riyadh-based Arab diplomat familiar with preparations.

Although some within the Saudi-dominated, six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council say that sitting with Iraq could be a step towards resolving some of their many differences with President Saddam, they accept that his presence could sabotage the summit.

"If Iraq's presence will block the convening of the summit, then not inviting it and holding the first summit in six years is a good first step towards resolving our (Arab) differences," said an official Gulf Arab source.

The last two Arab summits were held because of Iraq. Arab heads of state met in Cairo days after Iraq's troops invaded and seized Kuwait in August, 1990. Two months earlier, they had gathered in Baghdad to discuss a number of issues including a war of words and threats between Iraq and Israel.

reversal of developing ties between Israel and certain Arab states, but analysts suggested such a move was being sought by Syria.

In a first sign of trouble Sunday, Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasssem Ben Jahr Al Thani said his government would "revise its position" on normalising ties with Israel "if the attitude of the Jewish state changes or if this country begins to stall" over the peace process.

Palestinian National Au-

Palestinians want freeze in contacts

(Continued from page 1)

thority (PNA) headed by Yasser Arafat has so far refrained from taking an official position on the Netanyahu election other than to call for past agreements to be respected.

It has also urged an open agenda for permanent settlement talks due to resume after the new Israeli government takes office.

Nabil Abu Radeina, a close Arafat adviser, said Sunday that the PNA's goal at Cairo was to "restore Arab solidarity and reaffirm Arab

support for Palestinian rights in the final status negotiations."

He did not specifically reply to the calls for Arabs to freeze ties with Israel, saying only that the PNA would present a "working document" in Cairo with suggestions for "overcoming inter-Arab differences."

"What we need is to develop a global Arab strategy and to agree on a mechanism for negotiations" on a permanent Palestinian settlement, Dr. Ashrawi told AFP.

Yeltsin hails Tatarstan on last stage of campaign

KAZAN, Russia (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin began the last week of his election campaign Sunday with a visit to independence-minded Tatarstan, praising it for showing the way to live harmoniously with Moscow.

"You took as much autonomy as was needed for Tatarstan's prosperity and Russia's integrity," Mr. Yeltsin told local dignitaries in the regional capital Kazan, 800 kilometres east of Moscow.

Mr. Yeltsin's comments, one week before an election which will decide the fate of reforms in Russia, referred to a power-sharing deal between Kazan and Moscow, but also to his problems in breakaway Chechnya.

Russian officials and Chechen rebels were due to resume talks later Sunday to try to bolster a fragile truce in a conflict, which has dominated the latter stages of Mr. Yeltsin's presidency and affected his chances of winning a second term.

Violence in Chechnya and tough talk from both sides have reduced hopes of a quick end to fighting which has killed more than 30,000 people, many of them civilians.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, did not mention Chechnya after flying in to Tatarstan in the last stage of his election battle against Communist leader Gennady

Zyuganov. But he regards Kazan's relationship with Moscow as a model for Chechnya to follow.

Like Chechnya, Tatarstan sought independence but it avoided bloodshed in a 1994 power-sharing deal with Moscow which gave it more autonomy than any other Russian region.

Mr. Yeltsin was accused of contributing to the break-up of the Soviet Union by saying in 1990 that ethnic regions should take as much autonomy as they needed. But he is expected to reap some reward by getting many votes from Tatars next week.

"It was here that the word autonomy was understood correctly and I can tell you frankly this was successful," Mr. Yeltsin told about 1,000 local officials in a concert hall in Kazan.

Outside, he was received warmly by about 2,000 people gathered in the rain. He looked fit and healthy as he talked to the crowd.

It was a far cry from Tatarstan in 1992 and early 1993, when the region's leader Mintimir Shaimiyev posed as a big threat in Moscow as Chechnya's now late leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Mr. Yeltsin was due to head for Novosibirsk in Siberia later Sunday and will then go to the southern town of Rostov-on-Don.

Mr. Yeltsin's attempt to limit the da-

mage of the conflict in Chechnya hit another snag Saturday, when masked gunmen killed a senior Chechen official in the latest ceasefire violation.

Tim Guldemann, the head of the European mediators who brokered last month's truce, expressed alarm at the killing and other violence and urged the warring sides to stop fighting.

"The wave of human rights violations has not died down: air raids, hostage-taking, unjustified arrests, detentions and assassination attempts," said Mr. Guldemann, who represents the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Sunday's talks in Nazran, near Chechnya, were intended to reinforce the truce with confidence-building accords.

Mr. Zyuganov, 51, Mr. Yeltsin's closest rival in opinion polls which almost all put the Kremlin leader ahead, campaigned in Moscow Saturday and promised a bright future to thousands of mainly elderly but exuberant supporters.

"We will confidently march to the future, not to the past, using not concentration camps or an iron curtain but modern culture and the best Russian and Soviet traditions," he declared at a rally featuring patriotic and religious music and images.

10 shot by suspected Kashmir militants

JAMMU, India (R) — Ten villagers, including five members of a single family, were shot dead by suspected separatist militants in troubled Jammu and Kashmir state, Indian police said Sunday.

The guerrillas entered Kalmadi village in Doda district, 140 kilometres east of the state's winter capital Jammu, overnight.

They herded the victims, who were all Hindus, out of their homes before standing them in a line and shooting them, officials said. One woman who was wounded was later taken by helicopter to Jammu, they said.

Officials said the militants may have wanted to "punish" the villagers for participating in recent general elections in the Himalayan state, torn by a six-year-old separatist rebellion in which more than 20,000 people have died.

"The government should not have withdrawn the forces from these places which are vulnerable to militant attacks so soon after elections," Chaman Lal Gupta, who won the parliamentary seat in Udhampur district where Kalmadi is located, told Reuters.

Jammu and Kashmir is mostly Hindu India's only Muslim majority state. Dozens of Muslim militant organisations are fighting for either independence or merger with Pakistan.

Separatist groups had urged voters to boycott the polls.

Meanwhile four Western ambassadors visited Kashmir Sunday in what diplomats called an expression of concern over the fate of four tourists held hostage by separatist guerrillas for 11 months.

David Gore-Booth of Britain, Frank Elbe of Germany, Arne Walker of Norway and Frank Wisner of the United States arrived Sunday morning in Srinagar, the summer capital of troubled Jammu and Kashmir state, authorities said.

American Donald Hutchings, German Dirk Hasert and Britons Keith Mangan and Paul Wells were kidnapped by Al Faran militants last July while trekking in the Himalayan region.

A fifth hostage, Hans Christian Ostroff of Norway, was found beheaded in a remote

forest in south Kashmir in August.

The four envoys flew by helicopter over the mountainous terrain of south Kashmir to make a survey of Magam Rakh Forest, about 85 kilometres south of Srinagar, officials said.

Indian and foreign experts using two tracker dogs from Germany scoured the area last week for clues as to the fate of the four hostages.

They were led there by information given under interrogation by a captured militant, Nazir Mohammad, who said he believed the four had been killed and buried in the area last December.

The search of the area was abandoned after no leads were found, but diplomats said the experts, stationed at Kokernag Resort near Magam Rakh, would use the dogs in other regions.

Later Sunday the ambassadors met Jammu and Kashmir Governor K.V. Krishna Rao to discuss the hostage ordeal.

"We do not expect a breakthrough on this," a diplomat in New Delhi said. "But this is a public gesture and a high-level expression of our concern."

Al Faran has provided no positive proof the four hostages were alive since last August, and negotiations between the Indian government and the guerrillas broke down last November.

Indian authorities say they believe the hostages are alive and in good health, but want to follow up any leads including information provided by Nazir Mohammad, believed to be a member of Pakistan-based Harkat-ul-Ansar.

Harkat-ul-Ansar denies Indian government claims that it is linked to Al Faran, which was unknown before the kidnappings. But diplomats said Nazir Mohammad was believed to have been a negotiator for Al Faran before being captured.

The four tourists have been held longer than any other foreigners during the six-year-old separatist rebellion in Jammu and Kashmir.

More than 20,000 people have died in insurgency-related violence, police and hospital officials say.

Grachev welcomes arms reduction pact delay

MOSCOW (R) — Defence Minister Pavel Grachev Sunday welcomed a Western decision to give Russia three more years to meet conventional arms reduction obligations and said rules taking effect in 1999 would meet Russia's security needs.

Gen. Grachev was quoted by Interfax News Agency as saying the changes offered under the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty would let Russia have up to 3,700 armoured cars, 1,800 tanks and 2,400 artillery systems on "flank regions" from 1999.

"This volume of armed forces on our flanks fully allows the security of the state to be guaranteed," he said.

The CFE treaty limits the weaponry a country can put near its borders. Russia's adherence to the treaty had been in question, partly because of the military equipment sent to try to quell a separatist drive in Chechnya.

The 30 signatory states to the CFE agreed in Vienna on June 1 to give Russia until May 31, 1999, to meet the treaty requirements but said levels of troops and armour should not rise from current levels over the next three years.

"The decision taken in Vienna demonstrates the readiness of European countries to take Russia's position and opinions into account," Gen. Grachev said.

The 1990 arms reduction pact came into force last November but Russia, which feared its defence capability would be weakened if it pulled back troops, had been in technical violation of its terms.

Moscow argued that the treaty did not take into account the border changes within Europe since the disintegration of the Soviet Union and wanted new concessions on flank limitations.

"Similar compromises to Russia from Western Europe would hardly have been possible just a few years ago without the democratic changes which have taken place in our country under the leadership of President (Boris Yeltsin)," Gen. Grachev said.



Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej (right) leads Queen Sirikit down from a pavilion past bowing officials after the ceremony to worship former kings during celebrations on the 50th anniversary of his accession to throne at Sanam Luang in Bangkok on June 9. King Bhumibol is considered the longest reigning monarch in the world (Reuter photo)

Thais celebrate King Bhumibol's 50th anniversary as monarch

BANGKOK (R) — Thailand began celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of King Bhumibol Adulyadej's accession to throne Sunday with an elaborate and solemn ceremony honouring the king's royal ancestors.

While the king and the royal family presided over the ceremony at an ornate pavilion erected on the Sanam Luang Royal Crematorium Ground, the first of some 30,000 convicts to see early freedom under a royal pardon stepped through prison gates into the arms of tearful relatives.

Thousands of people watched the royal ceremony at Sanam Luang in the shadow of the golden spires and pagodas of the Grand Palace and Wat Keo, or the Temple of the Emerald Buddha.

King Bhumibol offered alms to Buddhist monks, including the supreme patriarch, the kingdom's most senior Buddhist monk.

The king, dressed in full ceremonial uniform with sash, medals and a sword at his side, was flanked by his wife, Queen Sirikit, and his son and heir to the throne, Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, 44.

Prime Minister Banham Silpa-Archa gave an address of thanksgiving as government colleagues, four former prime ministers and hundreds of government and palace officials looked on.

The 68-year-old King Bhumibol, a keen photographer, was without his favourite single lens Reflex camera, probably due to the solemnity of the occasion, but he was seen slipping a small auto-focus camera from his pocket and, without raising it, snapping a few pictures of the proceedings.

Towards the end of the ceremony, a 21-gun salute sent flocks of pigeons swirling into the partly-cloudy skies over the historic

heart of the capital.

Celebrations later in the day were less formal with millions of Thais across the kingdom lit candles honouring their monarch.

Later Sunday evening open-air performances of various kinds were staged throughout the country.

Jazz music, a particular favourite of King Bhumibol who is an accomplished musician and composer and who in the past jammed with some of the jazz greats, including Benny Goodman, was due to figure prominently in the capital's celebrations.

Meanwhile the gates of Klong Prem Prison in northern Bangkok swung open and beaming prisoners stepped out to freedom.

Corrections Department officials said some 30,000 convicted criminals were to be freed under the royal pardon.

But no one convicted of narcotics offences was due to be released and three Westerners to be set free were convicted on minor fraud or immigration law charges, the officials said.

About 40,000 other convicted criminals in jails across the country will have their sentences reduced under the pardon, among them the young man who murdered a British woman tourist last year, whose death sentence was commuted to life in prison, the officials said.

Yodchart Suepboon, 21, was sentenced to death in January for the murder the previous month of Johanne Masbeder, 23, from Cheshire.

The man, a Buddhist monk at the time he killed Masbeder, confessed to the murder and pleaded to be put to death at his trial but later changed his mind.



Thai prisoners walk out of Klong Prem Prison in the outskirts of Bangkok Sunday. Corrections Department officials said on the auspicious occasion of the 50th anniversary of King Bhumibol Adulyadej's accession to the throne some 30,000 convicted criminals were to be freed under the royal pardon (Reuter photo)

Bangladesh military seeks to curb pre-election violence

DHAKA (AFP) — The Bangladeshi military has been called out to put down election violence for the first time since last month's failed coup.

A top military officer said restoring order for Wednesday's elections would help repair its tarnished image.

Troops were deployed Saturday in Bhola district in southeastern Bangladesh to help put down a clash between rivals from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Awami League, local officials said, their first such action since the May 20 rebellion by renegade officers.

A man was hacked to death in election violence in Dhaka Sunday and at least two people were killed Saturday, bringing the unofficial pre-election death toll to 12 with more than 100 injured — still much lower than in previous elections in this politically volatile country.

The 40,000 troops deployed nationwide for the parliamentary elections will take police action only if ordered to do so by caretaker government chief Muhammad Habibur Rahman, a top general told AFP Sunday.

The general, who is at the core of defence strategy, cannot be identified because of military rules.

The troops would "go into action only

when called on by the civil administration," the general said. "They would play an absolute neutral role."

He admitted the army's role had been "tarnished" by the failed coup by rebel officers and that "ensuring fair and violence-free elections is essential as the process is an acid test to restore the image of the armed forces."

He said army chief Lieutenant General Mohammad Mahbub told troops they must support democracy "and ensure that people have total confidence in you."

Defence sources said Sunday there was still some support among certain military personnel for sacked army chief Abu Saleh Mohammad Nasim, charged with leading the rebellion, but that was to be expected and the situation was under control.

Some retired military personnel and civilians who fought in Bangladesh's independence war have been staging pro-Nasim rallies in Dhaka daily calling for an open trial.

A defence source hinted Gen. Nasim might face a closed "administrative action" and not an open court martial. He did not elaborate.

Officials in Bhola and Feni districts, where campaign violence broke out Saturday, said troops and heavy rains combined to bring the situation under control.

Imelda Marcos to launch singing career

MANILA (AFP) — An Australian producer held in thrall by former Philippines first lady Imelda Marcos' soprano has asked her to hold a recital or two in Sydney in March 1997, her office said Sunday. "I have noted in many media reports over the years that you enjoy singing, and could have had a successful career as a vocalist," said the letter by theatre production director Michael Herrman of Manifest Productions Pty. Ltd., made public here. "My company would be willing to provide you with first class airfares and accommodation, security and performance fees for one, possibly two recitals. We would also provide a pianist and small orchestra to accompany you," it said. The letter did not state the venue. It was not immediately known whether the widow of dictator Ferdinand Marcos had accepted the invitation. The 66-year-old former beauty queen, now a member of Congress, used to belt out love songs at election campaign appearances of her late husband. One certain roadblock is a court order banning her from travelling abroad. She has been convicted of graft charges but is free on bail while awaiting the result of her petition to overturn a 24-year jail sentence.

Pot-bellied Filipino soldiers told to slim down

MANILA (R) — Pot-bellied Philippine soldiers have been told to slim down or face dismissal from the military. In an order to all personnel, chief of staff General Arturo Enrile gave obese soldiers three years to shed excess fat, the Manila newspaper Today said. Those failing to comply will lose their chances of promotion or could be thrown out of the service. "Overweight, or obese individuals normally reveal a lackadaisical performance and threaten the credibility of the organisation," Gen. Enrile said.

Prince's schoolmates stage bare-bottom prank

LONDON (R) — Four pupils at the school attended by Prince Harry are in trouble after baring their backsides at photographers just minutes before Prince Charles and Princess Diana passed by. The four are likely to get severe reprimands from the head teacher at Ludgrove, an exclusive private school in Berkshire, southern England, British newspapers said Sunday. Many of them ran pictures of the prank. The newspapers said the four climbed onto a gate with their backs to photographers then pulled down their shorts in full sight of parents attending the school's sports day. Prince Charles and Princess Diana passed by minutes later, unaware of the incident. Prince Harry, 11, was not involved.

Euro-bagpipes banned from Euro 96 soccer matches

LONDON (R) — Scottish fans have been banned from taking their bagpipes to Euro 96 soccer matches because the musical instrument has been included on a list of offensive weapons. Anyone found carrying bagpipes to any match will have to leave them at stadium entrances or face a hefty fine. Other offensive weapons include knives, fireworks and gas canisters. "Bagpipes have been included in the FIFA rules of objects not permitted in football grounds and we have to stick by those rules," a Euro 96 spokesman said. "These rules are drawn up in the interests of spectator safety. Bagpipes have obviously been seen as unsuitable for a football ground."

India offers to resume talks with Pakistan

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's new government Sunday offered to resume a bilateral dialogue stalled since January 1994 with Pakistan, in hopes of ending lingering tensions between the bitter South Asian rivals.

Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda told his Pakistani counterpart, Benazir Bhutto, in a message that he shared her "sentiments ... about the need for peaceful and constructive relations between our two countries."

"My government stands ready to work, together with your government, to address all issues of mutual concern," the new Indian premier said in a response to Ms. Bhutto's congratulatory message of June 4.

"I suggest that as a step in this direction, we could revive the foreign secretary-level dialogue so that these thoughts and ideas could be developed further."

Mr. Deve Gowda's message comes five days after Ms. Bhutto congratulated him on becoming India's 11th prime minister, saying: "As civilised nations, let us sit across the table in a search for lasting peace."

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since their

independence from Britain in 1947, and their simmering row over the strife-torn Himalayan province of Kashmir has been a major source of tension.

Both countries are believed to be capable of producing nuclear weapons.

Foreign secretaries of the two countries last met in Islamabad in January 1994 for a two-day session that ended in a deadlock, and officials of both countries have been favouring a resumption of the dialogue.

Mr. Deve Gowda said it was time for India and Pakistan to shed their differences and search for areas of cooperation.

"We need to establish a firm relationship of trust, setting aside the difficulties that have impeded amity and cooperation," he said.

"We need to encourage the promotion of trade, economic and cultural contacts. These are the sure foundations on which the relationship between our countries can flourish."

Mr. Deve Gowda added: "As we approach a new millennium, I believe there is a historic opportunity for us who are at the helm of affairs in our respective countries to give a lead in

this direction."

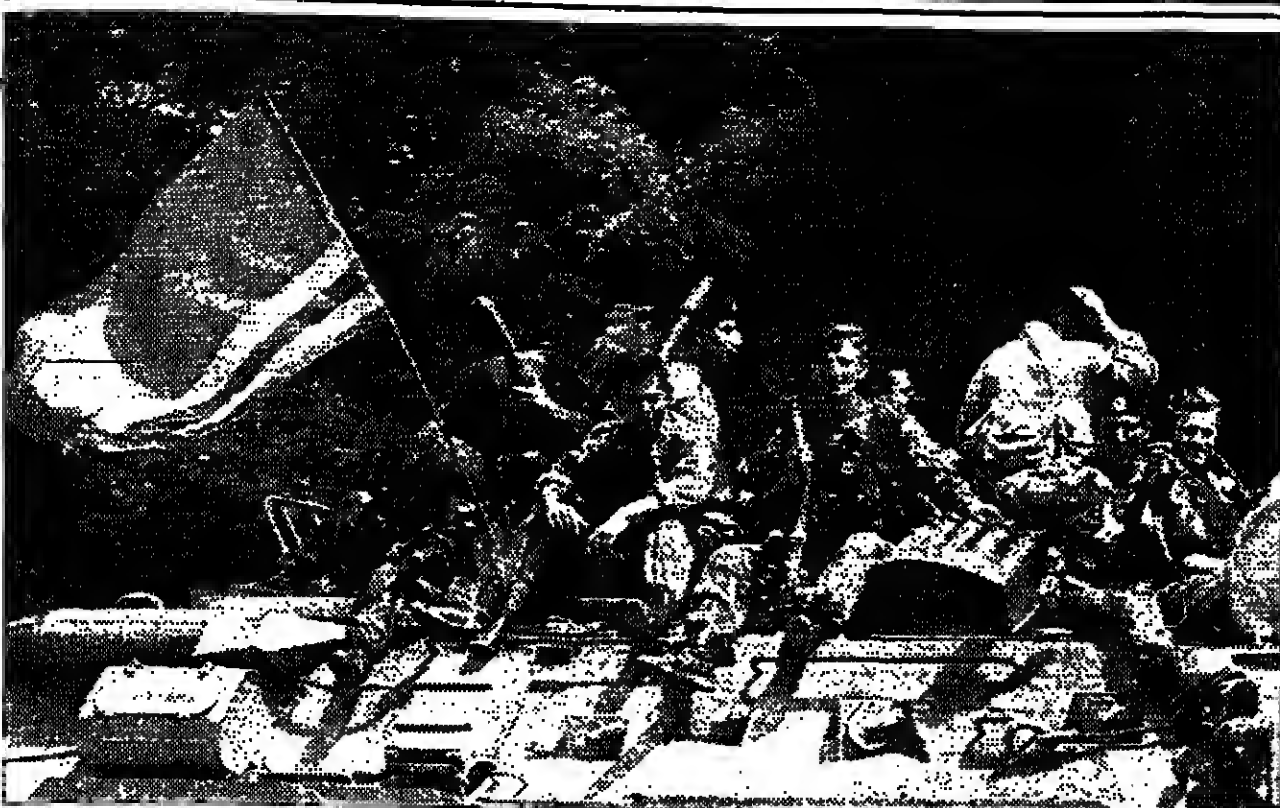
Indian External Affairs Minister Inder Kumar Gujral, in a separate message to his Pakistani counterpart, Asif Ahmad Ali, reciprocated Mr. Deve Gowda's sentiments.

"I feel that our officials should meet soon and engage themselves in the task of addressing bilateral issues, including those in which we may not see eye to eye," Mr. Gujral said.

Mr. Deve Gowda's response to Ms. Bhutto's offer of talks, which was hailed by the entire Indian political spectrum, was the first major breakthrough in bilateral relations in recent years.

India accuses Pakistan of fomenting a raging Muslim insurgency in Kashmir and terrorism in other parts of the country, while Islamabad says that New Delhi is behind the endemic violence in Karachi.

The two countries dispute the ownership of Kashmir, where their border guards engage in fierce gun battles. Both the nations have expelled each other's diplomats in recent years on charges of spying.



A group of Chechen fighters leave Grozny on their way to Nazran, the capital of Ingushetia for talks with Russian negotiators. Many Chechens will boycott the upcoming presidential elections in protest of Russian military presence in the region (Reuters photo)

Sinn Fein attacks London over bid for IRA truce

LONDON (AFP) — Responsibility for securing an IRA ceasefire ahead of multi-party talks on the future of Northern Ireland lies with the British government and not Sinn Fein, the party's number two Martin McGuinness said Sunday.

He said London had no right to lock Sinn Fein out of peace talks after it won almost 15 per cent of the vote in recent Northern Ireland elections.

"The British prime minister, more than any other party, is the person with the responsibility to convince the IRA that they should bring about a situation which would give a peaceful environment for all the parties to go to the negotiating table," Mr. McGuinness told the BBC.

Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, is barred from the talks which open in Belfast Monday, unless the IRA reinstates a 17-month ceasefire it ended in February with a bomb in London's Docklands which killed two people.

"The responsibility for achieving the ceasefire on this occasion lies with the British government. It does not lie with Sinn Fein. We are not going to take on again that burden which we took on at the beginning of 1994," he said.

He called on London to "face up to the reality" that Sinn Fein won 15.47 per cent of votes in elections to decide the make-up of the peace talks.

"If the British government locks Sinn Fein out of negotiations tomorrow (Monday), it is the equivalent of 100 British MPs being denied access to the British houses of parliament or 40 million Americans being told by the American president their views don't count," he said.

Mr. McGuinness has been pressing British Prime Minister John Major to promise the peace talks would be "serious and without conditions."

Meanwhile Northern Ireland's biggest political party the Ulster Unionists will go

into Monday's crucial all-party talks with distinct reservations about the chairmanship of U.S. Senator George Mitchell, its leader said Sunday.

David Trimble was scheduled to meet Sen. Mitchell in Belfast Sunday afternoon to discuss Unionist misgivings. Mr. Trimble held a meeting with other Unionist leaders, including radical Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader Reverend Ian Paisley, to discuss the issue Friday.

"I don't know about walk-outs, but at the very least Senator Mitchell's appointment will be called into question," Unionist sources said.

Mr. Trimble warned on BBC Television Sunday that though Sen. Mitchell had been foisted on the talks by the London and Dublin governments, the "process would be determined by 12 parties — 10 from Northern Ireland plus the two governments, not just London and Dublin."

"The British and Irish governments ... are only part of the process. They cannot determine the conduct of the process or the outcome," he added.

"This process belongs to all the people. Therefore the decisions as to how we proceed, who should chair it and all the rest, will be made tomorrow."

"It's up to us to decide. I'm not accepting anything the two governments suggest until all the parties are together and discuss it among themselves, and then we will decide what is the best way forward."

He said he would not be surprised if the talks were to prove "a bit bumpy."

Ulster Unionist Party deputy leader John Taylor described the choice of Sen. Mitchell as "most unfortunate."

"He cannot be perceived by the majority community in Ulster as starting from an impartial position and this could be damaging to the eventual success of these talks," said Mr. Taylor.

Suu Kyi maintains softer line but sure of victory

RANGOON (R) — Burma's pro-democracy opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi maintained a slightly softer line in her campaign for change in a speech to supporters Sunday, but said with the support of the people, victory was inevitable.

But the ruling military government gave no indication it might open talks with the opposition, continuing its verbal attacks on Ms. Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy (NLD) party and repeating a warning it would not tolerate dissent.

Ms. Suu Kyi told a cheering crowd of some 4,000 people lining the street outside her Rangoon home that, with their help, she was confident of success.

"With the support and cooperation of the people everything we do is going to be successful," she said. "There will be victory."

But Ms. Suu Kyi and two senior NLD colleagues refrained from direct criticism of the ruling military body, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), apparently in response to a tough new law against opposition introduced Friday.

She had also refrained from any harsh criticism of the military government in her speech Saturday.

"They're tuning it down," said one Burmese man who has attended the weekly gatherings outside Ms. Suu Kyi's home since the first one, shortly after she was released from six years house arrest in July last year.

There was no obvious heavy security presence at the gathering, no arrests and the crowd dispersed quickly at the end of the hour-long event.

The SLORC's new law, which appeared aimed directly at the NLD, calls for up to 20 years in prison for anyone who acts or distributes information deemed likely to undermine the stability of the state, community peace and tranquility and the prevalence of law and order.

The SLORC backed up the tough new law with another warning that it would not put up with "destructive" activities.

Senior SLORC member Lieutenant-General Tin Oo said in a speech Saturday that the government was working for peace and tranquility.

"We are working for the betterment of the country, but today one can see that destructive activities are being carried out to disintegrate the country. We will not tolerate (such) activities ... People will also not tolerate it," he added.

Russians, rebel Chechens pessimistic at new talks

NAZRAN, Russia (R) — Russians and rebel Chechens met for peace talks Sunday, but new killings in Chechnya and criticism of an international mediating mission created fresh obstacles to a breakthrough.

Neither side sounded optimistic as delegates arrived for the discussions in Nazran, the main city in the Ingushetia region which borders breakaway Chechnya.

"Honestly speaking, I don't have much hope," Chechen information chief Movladi Udugov said, linking the talks to Russian President Boris Yeltsin's re-election campaign.

"This is just a pre-election stunt. The only thing we feel from their side is an attempt to make it look as though there are talks going on everywhere so they can have their elections."

Mr. Yeltsin leads opinion polls but is being challenged by Communist Genady Zyuganov in the June 16 election. If, as expected, no candidate wins an overall majority next Sunday, a runoff vote will be held in July.

Russian Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov told reporters the killing of a local official in the Chechen village of Urus Martan Saturday could be a big obstacle to peace.

Russian troops stepped up security in the local capital Grozny, increasing patrols and closing roads and bridges.

Interfax News Agency said four soldiers were killed in the region during an overnight rebel attack on a Russian unit.

"The situation is deteriorating every day. Militants are becoming more active," the agency quoted Russian Commandant Paragan Andriyevsky as saying.

He said up to 300 separatist militants were operating in Grozny, firing on

troops and laying mines on routes used by Russian servicemen. Russian officials have frequently over-estimated the strength of rebel fighters in the breakaway territory, which declared itself independent in 1991.

The latest talks are brokered by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which has a small office in Grozny and mediated at a meeting in Moscow last month between Yeltsin and rebel Chechen leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev.

Chechnya's pro-Moscow government Sunday issued a statement which accused the OSCE mission of exceeding its authority and criticised mission head Tim Guldinmann.

"We welcome the OSCE as a peace-keeping organisation but its representative Guldinmann has taken an obviously one-sided stand regarding Chechen developments," Interfax News Agency quoted Moscow-backed Chechen Prime Minister Nikolai Koshman as saying.

"This contradicts the OSCE principles," he added.

Mr. Guldinmann, a Swiss diplomat, went with Mr. Yandarbiyev to Moscow last month and sat on his side of the table at the Kremlin.

He complained Saturday that killing was continuing in the rebel region and urged the warring sides to stop fighting.

"The wave of human rights violations has not died down: air raids, hostage-taking, unjustified arrests, detentions and assassinations," he said after a local politician was gunned down in the Urus Martan region.

OSCE representatives have complained that they cannot move freely around the breakaway territory, where Russian forces have been trying to

crush an independence bid since December 1994.

Some of them say the OSCE lacks the mechanism to monitor a ceasefire and ensure it is not violated.

Meanwhile Russian pensioners trapped in the Chechen capital of Grozny complained bitterly on Sunday about the excesses of Russian troops.

"Our own Russian army came to Grozny and destroyed everything. They turned out to be fascists," spat out Dmitry Linyin in the muddy courtyard of a battle-damaged cluster of flats west of the city centre.

"Nobody needed this, not (Russian President Boris) Yeltsin, not anyone. I was once an officer in the Russian army and I am ashamed. Russian troops must be pulled out of here, otherwise there will never be any peace. They behave like drunken thugs."

A retired engineer, Linyin has not received his pension in three months. He had no idea when another installment would come or how he can survive in this city of devastated buildings and lives if it doesn't.

Slumped on a crude bench in the trash-filled courtyard, unshaven and wearing a grimy blue suit and shirt, the man seemed close to giving up on life.

"I sent my wife away because it's impossible to live here. All last night there was shooting and no one knows what it was about. After dark it's too dangerous to leave your flat."

The bitter alienation voiced by Russians in Grozny indicates the unwanted effects of Moscow's military campaign.

"I left the city on Jan. 25 last year after the shelling got too bad and when I returned my flat was destroyed and everything I owned was gone," said a retired Russian technician.

Dole attacks Clinton over alleged 'enemies list'

MARIETTA, GA (R) — Republican presidential challenger Bob Dole stepped up his attacks on President Bill Clinton Saturday, accusing the White House of compiling an "enemies list" and demanding that Mr. Clinton apologise for it.

Sen. Dole seized on a list of about 330 people — some from previous Republican administrations — on whom the White House sought information from the FBI in 1993.

The White House said the requests, which just came to light, were an administrative error. It said an army aide on loan to the White House had used an outdated staff list while routinely checking security clearances.

Sen. Dole called reports of the requests for information "shocking" and "disturbing news."

At a campaign rally with House Speaker Newt Gingrich in Mr. Gingrich's hometown, Sen. Dole delivered his strongest broadside yet against the Democratic president, who leads him in public opinion polls by 15 to 20 percentage points.

"The group reads like a Clinton enemies list — Bush Secretary of State James Baker, Reagan Chief of Staff Ken Duberstein, Newt Gingrich's press secretary Tony Blankley — over 300 more law-abiding citizens whose only crime was to oppose Bill Clinton in 1992," Sen. Dole told an audience of several hundred, which booed the alleged White House transgression.

The term "enemies list" goes back to the Republican administration of Richard Nixon, when Nixon aides kept tabs on alleged enemies of the president.

The Clinton White House calls this dirt-digging expedition an innocent bureaucratic mistake. Sen. Dole said mockingly.

"But Bill Clinton has not explained why this so-called mistake was kept

secret until the investigations looking at the travel office scandal got too close to the truth," Sen. Dole said, referring to a House of Representatives probe into the firing of the White House travel staff in 1993.

"For an administration that is supposed to be the most ethical in history, the Clinton White House certainly makes a lot of innocent mistakes," Sen. Dole added.

The request for the records became known this week after the Republican chairman of the House Government Reform Committee revealed that the White House had requested FBI information on the former head of the travel office, Billy Ray Dale, seven months after he and his staff were dismissed. Mr. Dale was charged with embezzlement but acquitted by a jury.

Sen. Dole said, "I believe that President Clinton owes an apology — he owes an apology to the individuals involved and to all Americans for this sad invasion of privacy."

I believe it is up to President Clinton now to assure the American people that this unprecedented breach of FBI files was not the spade work of a vicious, negative campaign this fall," he added.

Meanwhile seeking to defuse the political uproar, White House officials Saturday said classified files on more than 300 persons, including prominent Republicans, were returned to the FBI without being examined.

Embarrassed White House officials insisted that the background records on some 330 individuals were mistakenly ordered by someone temporarily assigned to the White House to help update the list of persons allowed to enter the grounds.

President Clinton, asked if he was "satisfied it was an accident" that in 1993 the White House asked the

Federal Bureau of Investigation for the controversial background reports, replied affirmatively: "Based on what I know."

Mark Fabiani, a special White House counsel, insisted "This was a bureaucratic foul-up and nothing more" by a civilian army employee temporarily assigned to collect reports on people who held permanent White House passes.

"It was clearly an effort by the record keepers in the security office to fill in these background folders," White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry said. "They were doing this crash effort" to update access lists to the White House.

"There is no evidence that anyone checked out the files," Mr. McCurry said. "Nobody recorded out any of these files" to examine them.

Mr. McCurry said the fact an outdated list was used for the request was "a reflection of the way things happened" in the early days of the Clinton White House.

Once it was realised that the records were being stored at the White House "We called the FBI and said 'get them out of here,'" Mr. McCurry said.

Mr. Fabiani said that "on Thursday, when we were notified of the situation ... we notified the FBI and requested that they take possession of the files, which they did."

Mr. Fabiani said records show that the files "were not accessed" by anyone, with the exception of a May 21 request by a committee headed by Representative William Clinger, a Pennsylvania Republican, for all records on Mr. Dale.

It was Mr. Clinger who expressed outrage that Mr. Dale's records were sent to the White House after he had been dismissed — a controversial firing being investigated by his House panel.

New generation to take over after Dole leaves Senate

WASHINGTON (R) — The torch passes to a new generation in the U.S. Senate this week when Bob Dole leaves his post to campaign full time for the presidency after 11 years as Republican leader and a 35-year congressional career.

After Tuesday afternoon, when Sen. Dole resigns his seat, his Senate colleagues, some of whom have known no other leader in the chamber, will have to get used to life without his gravelly voice, flashes of humour and — increasingly in recent weeks — sharp political attacks.

Sen. Dole's successor as Senate leader is expected to be Mississippi's Trent Lott, who at 54 is 18 years younger than the prospective Republican presidential nominee from Kansas.

Sen. Lott is said to be comfortably ahead of his rival, fellow Mississippian Thad Cochran. However, the race will not be decided until Wednesday when the 53 Republicans in the 100-seat chamber will vote in a secret ballot.

The leader of the majority party has a crucial role in shaping the Senate's agenda, deciding what bills to place before it and acting as a key spokesman for his party — especially when the president is from the opposing party.

If Sen. Lott wins, his style is expected to be different from Sen. Dole's, more ideological and less willing to seek compromise.

On the Senate floor he is brisk and articulate. Sen. Lott has been serving as Sen. Dole's second in command after defeating Wyoming's Alan Simpson for the whip position by a single vote. He is said to be a good vote counter and on top of the job.

A former member of the House, he is a close friend of House Speaker Newt Gingrich and served as No. 3 Republican there. He moved to the Senate in 1989. He was the youngest member of the House Judiciary

Committee in 1974, loyalty defending then-President Richard Nixon as the panel prepared to vote articles of impeachment over the Watergate scandal that eventually drove Nixon from office.

Years later, Sen. Lott opposed George Bush's 1990 budget agreement with Democrats, which included a tax increase.

Sen. Cochran, 58, is also a conservative but not as hard edged as Sen. Lott. After serving three two-year terms in the House he was elected to the Senate in 1978.

With the Republicans seven votes short of the magic 60 needed to end the extended debate of a Democratic filibuster, it is not possible to force through legislation without some bipartisan support — difficult to muster in the super-heated atmosphere of presidential election years.

Asked about the legislative outlook, Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle told reporters: "To the degree we can work together, a lot will get done. To the degree that there is no cooperation, I can tell you there's very little that will get done."

He said it was premature to predict whether Sen. Dole's departure would help to cool the atmosphere in the Senate, which Sen. Dole has been using as a campaign launching pad.

In his last full week, the Senate voted on two issues that Sen. Dole hopes to use to define his differences with President Bill Clinton. As expected, Democrats blocked a missile defence plan and ensured defeat of an amendment to the constitution requiring a balanced federal budget.

Sen. Daschle paid tribute to Sen. Dole's Senate leadership, praising his willingness to move to the middle on issues and lead both sides of the Senate, as he did in getting a vote to support U.S. action in Bosnia.

China releases veteran dissident

BEIJING (R) — China released veteran dissident Ren Wandong Sunday after seven years in prison for his role in the 1989 pro-democracy demonstrations, but promptly whisked him away to an undisclosed location, his wife said.

"The police brought him home at around 2.00 a.m. (1800 GMT) and then took him to a northern city at 7.00 a.m. (2300 GMT)," Mr. Ren's wife Zhang Fengying told Reuters. Police did not specify the city.

"They said they were going to let him rest ... They did not say when he could come back," Mrs. Zhang said.

"I had no choice but to agree," she said. U.S. Broadcaster Voice of America later Sunday quoted Ms. Zhang as saying Mr. Ren travelled to the northeastern city of Dalian for 15 days of his own free will. Ms. Zhang could not be immediately reached again to clarify her position.

Mr. Ren, 51, was sentenced to seven years

in prison for accusing Beijing of human rights abuses and urging freedom for political prisoners during the student-led demonstrations that were brutally crushed by the army on June 4, 1989.

Mr. Ren has been active since 1978 when he was a founder of the China Human Rights League, a group in Beijing that disappeared a few months later after police arrested most of its members.

Mr. Ren was first detained in 1979 as he was pasting up a poster on Beijing's Democracy Wall and subsequently spent four years in prison. After his release he continued to write and distribute essays on human rights.

He was awarded the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award in 1994 for advancing human rights and democracy in China. During his most recent prison term, Mr. Ren suffered from catarrhs, chronic haemorrhaging and other illnesses.

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Habitat II, same view

ISTANBUL'S HABITAT II conference on human settlement opened Monday with much fanfare and a great deal of anticipation and hope; although it is doubtful that the conference would succeed to deal effectively with the meeting's long and tortuous agenda. The core issue before the Habitat gathering is to address human settlements in urban areas, increasing migration from the countryside to cities and the mushrooming of shanty towns in even the most countries in the world.

To paraphrase the central issue before the conference, the main challenge remains an economic one where poverty and deprivation have rendered human settlement, especially in developing and poor countries descend below the level of acceptable human standards. Bombay offers a classic example of the extent and magnitude of the crisis where 40 of its about 13 million inhabitants live in sub-human conditions.

When we look around we see most of the big cities in the developing countries experiencing a similar fate. Cairo, Abidjan, Nairobi, Lagos, Manila, Bangkok, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, to name just several of them, are prime examples of massive dislocations in human settlement. Here in Jordan the problem is still manageable but it is increasingly becoming harder to solve under the pressure of massive migration to urban areas, unemployment and poverty. When nearly half the population of Jordan are found living in the Amman-Zarka-Russeifa area, then there is something terribly wrong with the distribution of population in the country. Socialist countries in the past resorted to a regulated migration policy under which people would actually require a "visa" to live in major cities. Moscow and the then Leningrad offer examples of how regulation of human settlement can be too draconian. Of course we would prefer a more human way of persuading peoples to "spread out" in their countries instead of concentrating on major urban areas for seeking employment and living facilities.

What puzzles us is how Habitat II envisages to deal with a gigantic problem that would require billions of dollars to rectify on a global scale. We are naturally concerned about spending huge amounts of money on holding such international conferences when the odds are against them achieving much progress.

The issue of human settlement world-wide does not require diagnosis since there is a universal consensus on its genesis and how to go about redressing it. The Istanbul meeting can, however, succeed in attracting international attention to the plight of city dwellers in poor countries. An added awareness of the crisis could be the first step for its resolution. Yet we have seen time and again how world conferences on such issues as human rights, women, population, environment and disarmament never ended up being translated into actual deeds in the field. We therefore doubt that Istanbul's world meeting would succeed where other international gatherings have failed. Governmental and non-governmental delegations attending Habitat II can only be expected to return home to deal with their own respective agendas on the subject of human settlement in accordance with their sense of priorities and means. We would be pleasantly surprised if the international community this time around is able to move from rhetoric to action. If not, the idea of holding periodic world summits or conferences on several fronts should be open to questions.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

SINCE THE Oslo agreements were signed by Israel as a state and not by Shimon Peres as an individual, the new government of Israel ought to implement all their provisions including the redeployment in the West Bank town of Hebron, said a writer for Al Ra'i Sunday. Any further delays in implementing these agreements and particularly the redeployment programme as well as the negotiations on a permanent settlement between Israel and Palestine would result in very serious consequences, warned Sultan Al Harab. Since his election as prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has turned his back on the redeployment plan which was supposed to start right after the May 29 elections, as agreed on with the previous government; and he is not willing to order the army to pull out from the West Bank city, something which the army chief had said he could finish in a few hours, added the writer. Hebron is a sacred city for the Muslims who have lived in it for the past centuries and it is an Arab city which was occupied by Israel, like the other towns of the West Bank, in the 1967 war.

WRITING IN Al Ra'i Sunday, a columnist said that the Palestinian leadership should start thinking about a successor to Yasser Arafat, especially in the wake of reports about his illness. Mousa Barhoumeh said that the democratic process demands that another leader be appointed to help Mr. Arafat with his numerous duties and take over should the Palestine leader suddenly become absent from the scene. Regardless of the reports about Mr. Arafat's illness, the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation should seriously think of a substitute for Mr. Arafat who can gradually be banded over some of the Palestinian leader's duties so that no vacuum can emerge nor a dispute follow his passing away, especially that he is 67 years old and incapable of handling all questions and impossible for him to continue wielding all powers, argued the writer.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Restructuring the information ministry should be done with an eye on the law of the market

CURRENTLY THERE is a great debate being waged in the country over the restructuring of the Ministry of Information. A variety of views have been put forth which traverse across the spectrum from vehement support at one end to outright rejection at the other.

The debate promises to heat up even further because of the new information law whose draft was approved by the Cabinet a few days ago, thus guaranteeing that the restructuring is an upcoming political event. However, the government itself is the primary cause of the debate — in addition to being the owner of Jordan TV and Jordan Radio the government is confused about how far it should go in the restructuring process.

In order for ordinary citizens to act rationally, the government must make clear and timely announcements of its plans regarding this sector or any other sector. Furthermore, the restructuring of the information ministry and its components must be viewed in terms of the opportunities expanded to generate the output and the returns generated vis-à-vis the costs incurred from each additional unit of input. The quality of the final product has been extremely low, causing JTV to lose any competition for viewership it enters into with neighbouring stations.

Rational economic thinking requires that certain elements or instruments of the Ministry of Information be privatised as soon as possible and be allowed to vie with competitors that may be licensed to set up broadcast stations in Jordan. Because competition ensures that competitors either raise their quality standards or leave the market, a "sink or swim" type of approach. Furthermore, the private sector is more adept at producing efficiently than the public sector and is therefore more capable of employing our limited and scarce resources optimally.

It has been said that the strength of an idea must be determined in the marketplace where the seller of the idea offers it for sale at a cost to society; society then determines whether the idea is worth purchasing or not. In other words, a truth before it becomes a truth must involve a seller and a buyer. The expositor of an idea must be able to convince others of its worth and someone must be convinced of its merit before an idea is viewed as a truth. This notion is not hard to fathom if we recall Galileo and Copernicus whose ideas were so ahead of their times that the truth was not only rejected, it was viewed as a bad product. Good ideas are ideas that appear at the right time, sell to the right customer, are priced according to the forces of supply and demand and are usually compatible with the market.

The market for ideas is similar to any other market, it is efficient and can be distorted by external factors (indirect consumption or production of products that others consume, such as noise and pollution), government interference through licensing procedures and regulation (which is extremely distortive to market outcomes), monopolies

(which are usually perceived as inefficient and thus wasteful of the nation's resources) and information asymmetry (one party has a piece of information while the other is kept ignorant of it thereby causing the informed to cheat the uninformed in the trade process). The last three are clear indications of what the government role should not be: interference in the information market.

In spite of the above, views are plentiful on whether we should turn away from our traditional view of information or become more efficient and move towards a market system. However, one thing the debate should never allude to is the issue of national security because security is not at stake. Any government that attempts to control the flow of information to its citizenry will ultimately fail because technology has become so advanced that any such attempt by government is simply futile.

Technology has made it impossible for information to be censored. Messages can be passed over the fax and Internet in no time at all. Therefore, retaining the existing structure for the sake of controlling information is a complete waste of our resources, which are very limited and scarce and need not be squandered on useless ventures.

The main reason any government-controlled monopoly fails to be efficient is that such an enterprise lacks the entrepreneurial spirit of profit generation and therefore is inefficient. Moreover, these monopolies can only be profitable if they can have complete protection for their markets. The airwaves now belong to everyone and with the advent of the satellite dish our news stations have to compete for viewership with CNN and others.

Therefore, even if the government uses its monopoly as a propaganda device, the device is a failure. So why not license others to compete with them in Jordan thus drawing investors to the Kingdom; employing local talent to produce something that is world class; and inducing the incumbent to either shape-up or ship out?

Some may argue against privatising the TV and radio stations on the premise that the government needs a platform for its views. This is a valid argument. However, the government may do such a thing without trying to produce entertainment. It can simply have a news station or produce the news and have all existing channels broadcast their news programmes.

Providing the government a platform does not mean the existence of inefficient media centres which produce programmes that bore us to death. After all, it is my tax dollars that go into the making of the budgets of Jordan TV and Radio and there are many other types of spending that are more worthy of my money.

In a country that brags about lowering its unemployment rate from 25 per cent to 15 per cent (still a very high rate) and has admitted fears concerning inflation and currency stability, we really have to look hard at government resources and allocate our scarce money optimally.

Human Rights File

Israeli elections — the future will be the judge

By Waleed M. Sadi

AFTER THE dust settles in the wake of the Israeli elections, the day of reckoning will start with taking stock of what went wrong for Prime Minister Shimon Peres who lost with a razor edge margin.

The biggest irony of the voting results is the realisation that newly elected Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made it to the top position by the Arab vote and lack of vote. We all now know that Netanyahu won by just 29,457 votes out of nearly three million cast. We also know that 18,000 Arab Israelis voted for Netanyahu and nearly 12,000 cast white ballots.

Simple arithmetic would clearly show that without the Arabs' voting the way they did, Netanyahu would have never made it as the next Israeli prime minister.

The question that remains is why the Arabs helped the Likud to gain power when they know better than anybody else the party's negative record on peace with the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. What adds insult to injury is the record of Likud on Arab rights in Israel as well.

There are several explanations to this paradox in the Arab political thinking within Israel itself and what stands out most is the negative effect of Israel's "Grapes of Wrath" military operation against Lebanon last April on Arab support to Peres.

In the aftermath of the Cana massacre, where over a hundred Lebanese civilians lost their lives, Israeli Arabs were called upon to cast white ballots in the contest for leadership between Netanyahu and Peres. There was an attempt by Arab Israeli leaders as Abdul Wahab Darawsheh to reverse this posture few days prior to the elections day but it seems that the Arab negative mood towards Peres did not slacken enough to make all Arabs vote for him instead of merely 95 per cent.

Of course the Arab Israelis can always counter the claim that they have failed Peres in his most difficult hour by saying that Peres' policies on Lebanon and the PNA left some of them, at least, with no option but to

voice their concern by withholding their support. Besides, why should Arab Israelis vote in block as if they were a flock of sheep?

The other irony is that Peres was trying to woo Israeli voters to his side when he decided to wage his war against Lebanon. Peres wanted to prove that he could be just as tough as anybody else when it comes to his country's security needs, especially after the spate of Hamas bus bomb attacks last February and Hizbollah rocket attacks on northern Israeli cities and towns.

What Peres may have gained by one hand from his Lebanese encounter he apparently lost by the other. This became the classical zero sum game.

On the other hand, in order to spite Peres, the Arab side ended up hurting itself by helping elect a hardliner whose record on their civil and political rights is the least exemplary.

Now all sides would have to pick up the pieces and perhaps learn from grave errors committed along the way in preparation for the next round, a mere short four years away! And meanwhile, the ongoing debate about whether to give the new Israeli government the benefit of the doubt will be determined one way or another by the composition of Mr. Netanyahu's cabinet.

If the new prime minister chooses people like Ariel Sharon or Raphael Eitan, then all the calls for giving the Likud-led government a grace period to show its true colours would amount to very little. Those of us who still harbour the view that there is little difference between Labour and Likud in the framework of peace in the region can expect shocking revelations to the contrary as soon as Mr. Netanyahu's policies on security and peace with the Palestinians and the Syrians are made clear and the make up of his cabinet, especially with regard to the defence and foreign affairs portfolios, is known.

There are those of us who still cast doubts about Netanyahu's posture on regional peace. Only the coming days will be the final judge.

LETTERS

Behaviour mutations

To the Editor:

Amman downtown (al balad) would be the perfect centre of analysis to study the changing behaviour of men as spring arrives.

Taking a walk in autumn or winter down the very same streets is not at all the same as going for a stroll at this time of the year.

Going for a walk in the summer can often result in a nightmare event though one does try not to reveal one's "charms", going around dressed in the strictest possible way — long skirts that go down to the ground, tightly buttoned shirts etc.

Despite all these precautions, the same type of dress which only differs from winter as the austere stripes make room to the flowery patterns suddenly become a sensation among the members of the opposite sex.

The devouring looks, the arms that became longer (and in what way!), the hands that when you expect them least touch you skillfully: as one turns around incredulous and amazed to see the face of the shameless impudent, he is already slipping away like a squirrel among the crowd.

What is wrong with men as spring arrives? Can they no longer control their passion? Is it that this season produces mutations in men?

Begoña Alonso y De Paz, Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Haiti — teetering onward

By Gwynne Dyer

"IT IS A VERY exciting thing to see a group of people who suffered for generations under a dictatorship begin to take the first step towards a real democratic reform" said Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy in March about Haiti. Very exciting — like watching a tightrope walker in a high wind.

Axworthy was speaking just after Canada rescued the United Nations peace-keeping mission in Haiti by donating its troops free of charge for another four months. But now it is coming up to time to renew the force again, and it is back to the high wire.

It has been eighteen months since a U.S. operation, with United Nations' blessing, overthrew Haiti's military rulers and restored elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. It is fourteen months since a U.N. force took the place of the Americans. It is President Rene Preval. But Haiti is still a place where nightmares loom at the edge of vision.

Just before leaving office, Aristide abolished the army that has dominated and abused Haitians for generations, but thousands of aggrieved ex-soldiers and paramilitary "Tontons Macoutes" lurk networks virtually intact. The new Haitian National Police will take many more months to get a grip on the situation. And political stability is still not assured.

Part of the problem is Haiti's poverty, which was dreadful even before the economy was further devastated by the sanctions that were applied against the late military regime. A country where between 40 and 60 per cent of adults have no work cannot be stable.

But another part of the problem is the ex-priest and ex-president for whom the United Nations intervention

was originally undertaken, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. "Au revoir, President Titid," read the banners when he left office in February, prevented from running again by the Haitian constitution even though he had spent most of his five-year term in exile. "We'll meet again in court."

Aristide is a small man with a very big ego, and he clearly intends to return to power as soon as the constitution allows. For that reason he is intensely jealous of his emotional hold over Haiti's adoring poor, and would do nothing while in office to jeopardise it — even if the result was to sabotage Haiti's economic recovery.

"It has been eighteen months since a U.S. operation, with United Nations' blessing, overthrew Haiti's military rulers and restored elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. It is fourteen months since a U.N. force took the place of the Americans. But Haiti is still a place where nightmares loom at the edge of vision."

The crunch issue was privatising Haiti's bloated and corrupt state industries, which foreign-aid donors insisted on last autumn before they poured in any more money. Since foreign aid makes up 40 per cent of Haiti's budget, you would imagine that Aristide complied promptly. Indeed, he promised repeatedly to do so, but in fact he refused to do so even when his prime minister resigned in protest.

Privatisation and the inevitable job-shedding that accompanies it is intensely unpopular among Haiti's poor, so the poorest country in the Americas has received no foreign aid to bolster the budget and help

with the balance of payments since last October. Aristide preferred to leave the blame for privatisation to his successor.

The once and future president is an albatross around Rene Preval's neck in other ways as well. "How about a six-month, around-the-world cruise?" Suggested a Preval ally when the recently married Aristide left office, but instead he has stuck around to second-guess his successor and prepare his own return.

So with the economy sinking, inflation rising, and disorder still stalking the streets, Preval had to ask for a four-month extension of the U.N. force's stay in Haiti soon after he was

president. It bent its own rules to do it, and its action reflected a newly aggressive approach by what is now a clear majority of democratic countries at the U.N.

But that no longer worries Beijing: China has abandoned the ideological struggle to force the world body to treat tyrannies on the same moral level as democracies. What bothered Communist China was just the fact that Haiti has diplomatic relations with the "other China", Taiwan. So when Preval asked for the U.N. force to stay longer, Beijing refused to authorise more than 1,200 troops.

Neither Preval nor the U.N. thought that was enough, but China was adamant. At the last moment, Canada saved the day by donating more than 700 extra troops at its own expense. But that let renewal of the U.N. force in Haiti expire in June 30, and Haiti is not out of the woods yet.

Ottawa is again taking point in the attempt to extend the U.N. force's mandate down to the end of the year. (Canada's very large political and military investment in Haiti's is due to the fact that it is the only other French-speaking country in the western hemisphere). And at this point, the signs are looking good.

Every Security Council member except China has indicated that it will back an extension of the U.N. force's term, and Haiti and China are holding direct negotiations in New York. Preval's government also began talks with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in early April on the linked issues of privatisation and a restoration of foreign aid.

Haiti is still on the critical list, and its people cannot yet take either democracy or regular meals for granted. But it is making progress.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli official sees Iraqi nuclear potential

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Official who commanded Israel's 1981 air strike against an Iraqi nuclear reactor warned Sunday that Baghdad could again become a nuclear threat if U.N. sanctions against it are lifted. "For the time being, as long as there are sanctions and oversight against Iraq, this country does not represent a threat against Israel," said David Ivry, general director of the defence minister, in an interview published in the daily Yediot Aharanot. "But the threat lies in Iraq's nuclear potential, which could become real if the sanctions are lifted," he said, referring to U.N. sanctions imposed following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Mr. Ivry accused unnamed countries and companies "which need money" of "finding ways to get Iraq the know-how and technology necessary" to resume its nuclear programme. The official, who was head of the Israeli air force when it destroyed the Osprey nuclear reactor in Iraq in 1981, said the force "is stronger today than 15 years ago and is capable of carrying out a similar operation." The official also sounded an alarm over Iran's nuclear programme and Syria's acquisition of ground-to-ground missiles, which, he said, Damascus was planning to arm with chemical warheads.

French group sends aid to Gaza

GAZA (R) — Some 200 tonnes of food and medicine sent by a French humanitarian group arrived on Sunday in the Palestinian-run Gaza Strip, relieving from a crippling Israeli-ordered closure now in its fourth month. The lorry convoy arrived at Gaza's border with Egypt at 11 a.m. (0800 GMT), and Israeli authorities allowed the first three trucks to enter the self-rule zone after a six-hour delay. Palestinian border officials said. The other trucks are expected to enter during the night. The convoy, carrying a total of about \$300,000 worth of supplies, was part of an aid programme called "Partners for Peace" set up by the French humanitarian group Equipement. The wife of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Suha and the widow of slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Leah, are among public backers of the programme.

Israel doubles pay of combat troops

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli army has decided to double the pay of active combat soldiers amid new reports of a serious drop in troop morale, the daily newspaper Haaretz reported on Sunday. The newspaper quoted a high-ranking officer as saying the pay for soldiers serving in field units would be doubled to the equivalent of \$170 per month. The army is also considering funding the costs of one year of university studies for every soldier at the end of their service. The pay hike was decided after an internal study run by General Ran Glicka concluded there had been "a fall in motivation" and a decline in Israel's readiness to serve in combat units, the newspaper said. It was the latest in a series of reports to raise alarm at falling morale in the Israeli army, but it was the first time the army acknowledged a drop in interest in serving in combat units. Military service is mandatory in Israel, with three-year stints for men and two years for women. Men must also serve one month per year in the army reserve after their full tour of duty.

Iraq denies holding any Iranian PoWs

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq said on Sunday it had freed all Iranian prisoners of war (PoWs) and denied claims by Tehran it was still holding 700 Iranians captive. A spokesman for the Iraqi Foreign Ministry told the official news agency INA that Tehran's declarations were "without substance," adding that Iraq "had freed all the Iranian prisoners of war under the supervision of the international committee of the red cross (ICRC)." The Iranian official in charge of prisoners of war, Ali Akbar Abutorbati, told the daily Tehran Times on Thursday that Iraq was still holding around 700 prisoners of war. The issue of prisoners of war from the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq conflict has for the past five years been the major obstacle preventing the normalisation of ties between the two countries.

2 Iranians stoned to death, 3 hanged

TEHRAN (R) — Two Iranian lovers were stoned to death for adultery and murder and three others were hanged in public for kidnapping and murder, newspapers said on Sunday. Jomhuri Eslami daily said a man and a woman, who were married to other people, were stoned to death in the northwestern city of Orumiye after a court found them guilty of adultery and murder. It did not say when the stoning, the punishment for adultery involving a married woman under Islamic Sharia law in force in Iran, was carried out. The 33-year-old woman, helped by her 40-year-old lover, had killed her husband, burned his corpse and then reported him as missing, the paper said. In a separate case, three main members of a criminal gang dubbed "Scorpion," were hanged in public in the northeastern city of Mashhad on Sunday, Kayhan newspaper said. It said gang members had kidnapped and killed five women after stealing their jewelry during 1989-90.

Police save film director from audience

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian policemen hosted a film director and his wife out of a seminar in Cairo on Saturday night after angry critics of his film tried to assault them. Director Osama Girgis Fawzi was appearing on the podium to discuss his new film "Devils of the Asphalt," which tells a tale of low life among Cairo minibus drivers, witnesses said. Film critics told the seminar the film took advantage of the sufferings of poor Egyptians, showed them in the worst possible light and contained gratuitous sex and perversion. One minibus driver was really honest and drivers as adulterers while they were really honest and faithful. A group of 15 to 20 participants advanced to attack Mr. Fawzi and his wife Salwa Khattab but the policemen took them out of the cinema and closed the seminar.

Algerian court sentences 7 to death

PARIS (R) — An Algerian court on Sunday sentenced seven militants to death in absentia for involvement in guerrilla activities, the official Algerian news agency APS said. In three separate trials, the court in Medea, 70 kilometres south of Algiers, convicted the seven men of belonging to an armed group, voluntary manslaughter, criminal conspiracy, illegal possession of weapons and other charges. It quoted a court statement as saying. The court sentenced the seven to death and an eighth militant, also on the run, to life imprisonment, APS said. Medea is a guerrilla stronghold where seven French Trappist monks were kidnapped and murdered last month by gunmen of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). Apart from Sunday's rulings, the Medea court has sentenced 26 militants to death, 14 of them in absentia, in the past three weeks for similar charges.

Croatian police arrest war crimes suspect

ZAGREB (R) — The Croatian Ministry of Justice said on Sunday that police had arrested Zlatko Aleksovski, one of nine Bosnian Croats indicted by the U.N. war crimes tribunal for former Yugoslavia. Aleksovski was arrested on Saturday in the region of Split, said a ministry statement, quoted by a Zagreb radio station. The U.N. tribunal in the Hague named Aleksovski, 29, and other five Bosnian Croats as suspects linked to war crimes committed against the Muslims in the Lasva Valley in 1993.

Jordanians seek small, medium joint ventures with Japanese

AMMAN (Petra) — Representatives of the private and public sectors in Jordan on Sunday urged Japanese businessmen and investors to help initiate small and medium-size income-generating projects in the Kingdom serving as a nucleus for major Jordanian-Japanese firms.

The call was made by Haidar Murad, chairman of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, and Mohammad Halaqa, head of the Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO), during a workshop held within the framework of the Japan Week in Jordan that opened Saturday.

Mr. Murad reviewed the role of the private sector in Jordan and said the sector has affirmed its role since the start of the 1973 national development plan, which helped develop foreign trade

and increase the number of commercial companies in Jordan.

He said Jordan was seeking to reduce the deficit in its trade balance by increasing its exports and establishing joint projects with foreign partners.

The Kingdom, he said, started to produce high quality products to be able to compete in international markets and meet the local demand in its market.

He reiterated that Jordan was preparing laws and regulations that would attract investments and updating existing laws to serve that purpose.

Mr. Murad stressed that Jordan welcomes establishing small joint ventures with Japanese partners to provide job opportunities to the unemployed and increase production, adding that such ventures may later constitute a base for major projects that

would transfer modern technology to Jordan and offer training to Jordanian personnel.

Mr. Murad underlined the importance of the Kingdom's central strategic location, saying this enables Jordan to become a marketing centre for the whole region.

Mr. Halaqa said in a working paper the unavailability of natural resources in the Kingdom made it focus on developing the human dimension.

He dwelt on the Kingdom's economic development process, saying the gross domestic product (GDP) grew annually by six per cent in the past three years.

He also outlined the new economic laws and legislation aimed at attracting investments, noting that Jordan should not be viewed as a small market, but as part of a region whose population totals 150 million.

He also spoke on Jordan's preparations to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its talks with the European Union (EU) on a partnership agreement as well as trade accords it signed with many countries and said all these provide the Kingdom with export markets for its commodities.

Director of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) Omayya Touqan presented a working paper on the economic reform programme, which, he said, has produced significant results.

While the economic growth witnessed a 13.5 per cent drop in 1989, he said, in 1995 it reached 6.4 per cent. He added that inflation dropped from 25.8 per cent in 1989 to 2.3 per cent in 1996.

He said the volume of trade at the AFM exceeded JD 1,000 million in 1992, while in 1995 it reached JD 514 million.

Jordan backs collective action

(Continued from page 1)

states, through a "comprehensive, complementary policy that will steer us away from the policy of 'closed axes and limited alliances'."

He said that Jordan had always rejected the "policies of alliances and axes."

Addressing the future of the peace process in light of Israel's right-wing Likud Party's return to power, Prince Hassan said that positions "should be based on the stands of countries and not on the basis of election campaigns."

"Everybody in this area should work towards consolidating the process of building the peace that has been achieved and not towards going back to the starting point," the Prince said, adding that "renewing the Madrid peace conference which launched the peace process" should mean resuming the peace process and not going back to the starting point.

Responding to a question on Security Council Resolution 986, which allows Iraq to sell limited amounts of oil, the Crown Prince referred to

Netanyahu keeps hardliners at bay

(Continued from page 12)

mands as unrealistic. The outgoing Israeli government decided on Sunday to buy eight armoured-plated Cadillac cars for ministers at the request of the Shin Bet secret service, a finance ministry spokesman said.

But the ministers were likely to get little or no use out of the U.S.-built luxury cars. Security for Mr. Peres and members of the cabinet has been tight since a right-wing Jew assassinated Yitzhak Rabin last November as the

Israeli leader was about to step into his car after a Tel Aviv peace rally.

Both Mr. Peres and Mr. Netanyahu, protected by a special bodyguard wing of the Shin Bet, already travel in armoured-plated Cadillacs.

The spokesman declined to say how much the eight new cars would cost. State-run Israel Radio said the Cadillacs would cost \$170,000 each, which the radio said was about three times the price of the Nolvos currently used by cabinet ministers.

Velayati in Damascus with message

(Continued from page 12)

to brief him on Bahrain's summit expressed solidarity with Bahrain in its efforts to counter foreign intervention.

Syria has played a role in mediating in disputes between Iran and Arab states in the Gulf.

The weekend Damascus summit expressed solidarity with Bahrain in its efforts to counter foreign intervention.

Mr. Velayati was last in Damascus in April to take part in efforts to stop fighting in Lebanon.

Arabs prepare for summit

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Mubarak also invited Algeria's Liamine Zeroul, Morocco's King Hassan, Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh and Mauritania's leader Maouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya and the leaders of Tunisia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain, the newspapers said.

Non-Arabs — but members of the 22-nation Arab League — Djibouti and the Comoros were also contacted by the president, his political affairs advisor Osama Al Baz said.

"There are also contacts to coordinate a foreign ministers' meeting ahead of the summit," Dr. Baz told reporters.

But he refused to comment when asked whether Sudan, whose relations with Egypt hit rock bottom after Mr. Mubarak escaped an attempt on his life last June, would participate in the summit.

"Let's wait a while," he said.

Sudan meanwhile said it supported the summit, saying it represented a hope for restoring Arab solidarity.

"Arab summits, even small ones, create an air of hope for the restoration of Arab solidarity to defend Arab and Islamic causes," said Sudan's state minister for foreign affairs, Mustapha Osman Ismail, as quoted by the press in Khartoum.

Cairo accuses Khartoum of harbouring and training the men who tried to kill Mr. Mubarak in Addis Ababa and has strived for implementing U.N. sanctions against its southern neighbour to force it to extradite the three men to Ethiopia.

Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qadhafi — a bogeyman to the West — was also invited, Egyptian newspapers said.

Mr. Mubarak said Iraq would not be invited to attend, saying there were

Netanyahu silent on Arab moves

(Continued from page 1)

Olmert of Likud, told Israeli army radio.

"They understand there will be a government here that will be more stubborn on various matters, that will be strict about sticking to an agreement on the basis of mutual trust, that there won't be a situation any longer of unlimited leniency for every violation of an agreement," Mr. Olmert said.

"The Arab states are showing nervousness because the relatively comfortable life they had with the previous government has ended and a new period has arrived," said Mr. Olmert, who is tipped for a senior cabinet post.

"It is part of a natural and expected reappraisal that one shouldn't get excited about."

Former Justice Minister Dan Meridor, also expected to take an important portfolio in the Netanyahu cabinet, counselled Arab leaders "to wait for Netanyahu's visit to Washington at the end of the month to see what the new rules are for the peace process."

Yossi Beilin, who was the top peace coordinator for Mr. Peres, also recommended caution, telling Israel Radio "it would be wrong to judge Netanyahu's intentions before he has even formed a government."

A senior foreign ministry official who spoke on condition of anonymity pointed out that despite the strident warning in the Arab statement Saturday, the three leaders made no call for Arab states to freeze or break their fledgling relations with Israel.

The Israeli press was less upbeat.

The mass circulation

Yediot Aharanot ran an editorial titled "no reason for panic" but went on to suggest that Mr. Netanyahu "act quickly to finalise his government and clear the fog around his intentions," expressing the hope the new government's policy will be "moderate and acceptable to the United States."

The independent Haaretz newspaper saw the summit as a bid by Syria to revive its pan-Arab strategy for isolating Israel by discouraging moderate Arab states from improving ties bilaterally with the Jewish state.

In Tel Aviv, Arab embassies and diplomatic missions planned to hold their first joint meeting on Wednesday to discuss Mr. Netanyahu's election.

A Jordanian embassy official said on Sunday his embassy had invited representatives of Egypt, Tunisia, Mauritania, Morocco and Oman to attend what he hoped would be the first in a series of regular coordination meetings.

Ahmad Tibi, an Israeli Arab adviser to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, assailed Mr. Netanyahu for believing he could make peace with Palestinians while failing even to mention or meet Mr. Arafat.

"Whoever thinks that it's possible to make peace with the Palestinians or that there will be stability in the region while going around Yasser Arafat makes a big mistake," Mr. Tibi told army radio.

Mr. Olmert said Mr. Netanyahu would consider meeting Mr. Arafat if need be on security issues and other "matters of substance" which he declined to specify.

Arabs reject new Madrid conference

(Continued from page 1)

On May 23, during his election campaign, Likud leader Netanyahu said if elected he would try to re-launch the peace process by calling for a new Madrid conference.

Dr. Baz also criticised the draft programme of a Netanyahu government,

leaked to the press Friday, which ruled out the creation of a Palestinian state or the division of Jerusalem and said it would boost Jewish settlements.

"Neither Israel nor any other state can impose on us its own concept of peace," he said.

before the new prime minister has said anything other than to reaffirm his commitment to peace," Mr. Weizman said.

Arab governments are most concerned by Mr. Netanyahu's reported policy guidelines, which rule out any further territorial "concessions" to the Arabs, including the return of the Golan Heights to Syria and the creation of an "independent Palestinian state."

They also reject any division of Jerusalem, despite Palestinian claims of the eastern sector as their capital, and call for increased Jewish settlement.

So far, Jordan, Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait and the Palestinian National Authority have indicated they will attend, along with Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria.

Some Arab commentators however, remained sceptical about the success of any summit to unite the divided Arab states.

"Despite all the Arab summits, until now they have not demonstrated a clear policy

Turkey and Israel step up cooperation despite warning

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Turkish air force pilots flew prototype Israeli warplanes last week to test a new radar system slated to equip Ankara's fleet of U.S.-made fighter jets, Israeli Radio reported Sunday.

In the latest example of growing Israeli-Turkish military cooperation which has drawn widespread protests from Arab states, the pilots were invited by Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) to examine the new Elta radar system on board one of the prototype Lavi warplanes, the radio said.

The state-owned aeronautics firm hopes to install the radar system of 54 U.S.-made Phantom fighters which are due to be modernised by Israel for the Turkish air force.

Israel and Turkey are currently negotiating financing for the \$600 million modernisation programme.

The radio said Israeli President Ezer Weizman, who is scheduled to visit Turkey on Tuesday and Wednesday for the U.N. summit on urban problems, had joined IAI in pressuring major Israeli banks to provide loan guarantees needed to clinch the project.

Israel and Turkey signed a military cooperation agreement on Feb. 23 calling for joint naval and air force

training, technology sharing and exchanges of personnel.

The deal would reportedly permit Israeli warplanes to use Turkish air space for manoeuvres, an element which drew sharp protests from several Arab governments, including Egypt but particularly Turkey's neighbours Iraq, Syria and Iran.

Turkey's Islamic fundamentalist Welfare Party, which is trying to form a government after the collapse last week of the coalition administration headed by Mesut Yilmaz, has said it will cancel the cooperation agreement if it comes to power.

The Turkey-Israel military accord came up again over the weekend at a summit meeting in Damascus between Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Azz.

In a joint declaration the three leaders called on Turkey to reconsider its military agreement with Israel and called on Ankara "to adopt a policy of good neighbourliness and respect for Arab interests."

"The leaders express their anxiety and concern over the recent Israeli-Turkish deal and demand Turkey reconsider this agreement," it said.

U.N. meeting struggles against images of gloom

ISTANBUL (R) — After a week of hard-hitting messages of a bleak urban future, the U.N. Conference on Cities is pushing for cooperation among governments, local authorities and civil groups to dispel the gloomy images.

In the Habitat II conference in Istanbul, which reached the half-way stage on Sunday, governments, mayors, aid groups and city planners have been working together as never before, but their task of combating growing urban ills is a tough one.

"There are hundreds of millions of people who live in very bad conditions in the world today, there are millions of people living on bridges, in holes ... I have even seen families living in big pipes," Habitat II Secretary-General Wally N'Dow said.

Mr. N'Dow said in an interview at the weekend with Reuters that a central focus on the conference was to create cooperation at all levels — governmental, civilian and local — that would continue after Habitat II.

But developing countries' delegates have said action and money had to come out of the conference if it was not to be a useless statement of good intentions.

At the two-week summit, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) speak to the main floor for the first time while local administrations, city planners and aid groups hold meetings and issue reports that directly influence the central working committees.

Mr. N'Dow said urban issues had become so complex now that central governments no longer had the means to cope with them.

He said that urban poverty, bad infrastructure and crime sparked a lack of in-

vestment that doomed countries — a linkage until now virtually ignored.

"When people are engaged in those struggles it is very difficult for the system to work," Mr. N'Dow said. "And if you are a developing country — forget it. No one is going to come and invest in a place that could go up in flames."

"If cities don't work, you can't walk the streets, make telephone calls, get a bus, where the airline does not work, you cannot get investment. If this conference does nothing but convey this message ... it will have done a very good service."

The United Nations has said there are 100 million homeless worldwide — mostly women and children — and up to 600 million poorly and unhealthily housed.

More than 1.5 billion people in cities will face environments that threaten life and health by 2025 unless a revolution in urban problem-solving takes place.

According to the U.N. statistics, 40,000 people daily die of hunger, one billion live on less than a day and 1.7 billion have no access to education.

A U.N. statement said most cities in the developing world and even some in the West would face severe water shortages, setting up a struggle between thirsty cities and agriculture, which currently drinks up 80 per cent of world water.

The report said already 10 million people died annually through dirty drinking water alone.

Though mindful of these prophecies of doom, Habitat II delegates have so far failed to come up with concrete recipes, focusing mainly on whether housing should be a human right.

towards the peace process," a commentator in the Kuwait daily Al Sayassah wrote.

Newspapers in Baghdad denounced the exclusion of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from the summit, saying it was a vain bid to salvage what Arab leaders can from the troubled Middle East peace process.

Al Ahran, Egypt's leading newspaper, said Sunday that the summit would send a message to Israel that peace is a far cry from "Likud's announced policy and the attempts towards war-mongering and hysterics through... threats to cancel peace agreements."

Other editorials in government-run newspapers across the Arab World called the summit a rare chance to close Arab ranks.

Kuwait praised the exclusion of Iraq, and one commentator said its absence would help the meeting avoid pointless fights.

"An Arab summit reunites (Arabs) and excludes the Iraqi regime," read the headline in Al Qabas, an independent newspaper.

S. Arabia may pay all contractors' debt this year

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia is widely expected to finish paying its outstanding debt of billions of dollars to contractors and farmers this year, bankers have said.

They said the kingdom's method of paying back its debt through issuing special bonds was efficient and working well, even though the kingdom is accumulating more domestic debt.

It is expected that by the end of the year they will finish paying back the arrears

to contractors," one banker said.

"The payments are progressing very well and they should finish paying this year," another one said.

"By issuing bonds they are accumulating internal debt, but they are not doing it in such a rate for it to be dangerous or worrying," he added.

The debt had been mounting since the early 1990s when the kingdom fell behind on payments to

contractors, suppliers and

farmers as a result of huge Gulf war liabilities amid soft world oil prices. Some have been waiting for payment for years.

There are no official figures on the original total debt to contractors and farmers, but bankers and economists estimate it at 20 billion riyals (\$5.3 billion).

Of that amount, two bankers said they believed that only eight billion riyals remained outstanding, but

that could not be confirmed.

"They are definitely on track, which is very good news for the economy and is boosting confidence and generating business," said a Western diplomat.

"Paying the arrears is freeing up liquidity which contributes to growth," he said. "It is not sure whether they can continue issuing bonds. Probably some would be paid by cash or by syndicated loans."

UAE port eyes position as world's top ship fuel supplier

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A United Arab Emirates (UAE) port close to the strategic Hormuz Strait in the Gulf is planning expansions to oust Singapore as the top bunkering position in the world.

The port of Fujairah in the Gulf of Oman said it would start building new wharfs this year to face growing demand for fuel by tankers carrying oil and other products through Hormuz, the busiest waterway in the world.

"The construction of these wharfs has become necessary due to an increase in business," port director, Musa Murad, told the Fujairah Chamber magazine.

"We are competing with Singapore for the top position in ship fuel supply worldwide. We have made substantial progress in such a business," he pointed out.

Hundreds of tankers gather at Fujairah every day to get fuel before they proceed through the Strait of Hormuz into the Gulf, home to more than 60 per cent of the world's proven crude reserves.

Nearly one fifth of global oil exports pass through Hormuz in an average 100 vessels a day.

Fujairah, a non-oil member of the UAE, has used its location of less than 150 kilometres south of Hormuz to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to develop its port to provide services to large carriers.

Egypt opens door to private sector to build four desert highways

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt is to allow the private sector to build four desert highways, including two running the length of the country parallel to the Nile River, the newspaper Al-Akhbar said.

The cabinet agreed to the projects, the government daily said, adding that projects to build three electrical stations at a total cost of \$1.4 billion will also be given to private investors.

One of the highways will run from Alexandria on the Mediterranean coast to Fayyum, 240 kilometres to the south, it said.

A second will run 850 kilometres from Fayyum to Aswan, Egypt's southernmost town, creating a high-way running the entire length of the country.

Another route running 260 kilometres will link the southern town of Dairut with Farafra oases in the Western Desert.

The fourth, 500 kilometres long, will connect Kharga oases, also in the Western Desert, with Sharq Al-Awadi.

Contracts for the roads, the first to be built by the private sector, will be open to international bids, the paper said.

Al-Akhbar said that two electricity stations are to be built by the private sector on Egypt's Red Sea coast, while a third is for the Mediterranean shore.

The projects are among Egypt's first moves to open infrastructure projects to the private sector.

BUSINESS

A review of news from the Arabic press

Jordanians throw \$9 million worth of unconsumed cooked rice into garbage each year

★ JORDANIANS CONSUME about 90,000 tonnes of rice annually but, according to an opinion poll conducted by the National Protection Society, 21.4 per cent of the amount, or 19,260 tonnes, are wasted. This quantity, which ends up in garbage, carries a total cost of \$9 million if calculated at the current price of \$460 per tonne.

Ahmad Obeidat, president of the society, said the survey covered only the consumption of rice inside Jordanian families and did not take into consideration the waste resulting from social ceremonies such as happy or sad occasions. A rough estimate puts the percentage of waste from such ceremonies at 60 per cent, Dr. Obeidat indicated.

The survey showed the following results:
— 72.2 per cent of the random sample of housewives polled do not consume all the rice they cooked and the unused quantity gets thrown in the garbage bags. 22.9 per cent eat the leftover rice the next day.
— 51.3 per cent cook rice three times a week.
— 18.3 per cent cook rice every day.
— 53 per cent cook half a kilogramme each time, 21 per cent cook three-quarters of a kilogramme and 26 per cent cook 1.5 kilogrammes of rice each time (Al-Dustour).

Paper company offsets drop in exports to Iraq by boosting local sales

★ THE ARAB Paper Converting and Trading Company (APCT) turned to the local market last year to offset the drop in exports to Iraq resulting from "the circumstances that surrounded the Jordanian-Iraqi trade protocol." As such, local sales increased by 41 per cent, from JD 1.32 million in 1994 to JD 1.85 million in 1995 whereas exports to Iraq dropped from JD 1.45 million to JD 713,000. Despite this decline, the company managed to obtain a \$1.5 million contract under the protocol with Iraq and to execute 15 per cent of the deal in 1995.

The company's general manager told the general assembly that during the first four months of 1996 sales were equal to the total of JD 2.55 million earned throughout 1995. He indicated that the company has started trial production of carbonised paper and will be putting it on the market after few weeks. The company will also start producing coated paper in a short while, the general manager said, noting that the company will be the first in Jordan to make such a type of paper.

Board chairman Adel Hijawi told the shareholders that APCT has established a new entity to be known as the Arab Paper Coating Company to benefit from the investment promotion law. All new projects are to be implemented through this company in which APCT has a 99.9 per cent stake. Mr. Hijawi said noting that trial production of box files and egg cartons has started.

The APCT is currently distributing JD 241,600 of dividends to shareholders at a rate of 10 per cent as the company posted a JD 301,100 net profit last year. APCT's total assets amount to JD 6 million (Al-Rai'at Al-Aswad).

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (June 3-June 7, 1996)

AMMAN — The U.S. unit appreciated moderately against other major currencies last week. It ended the week 1.13 per cent and 0.86 per cent higher against the yen, the mark and sterling, respectively.

The dollar appreciated marginally against the yen and the mark Monday (3-6-1996), while it depreciated slightly against sterling. The dollar rose as traders covered short dollar positions on speculation that the May employment data will show encouraging results for the Fed to increase U.S. interest rates. Economists speculated that May non-farm payrolls will go up by 165,000 person, compared to only 200,000 person in last April. In addition, economists expected the unemployment rate to rise by a mere 0.1 per cent to reach 5.5 per cent. Furthermore, the dollar was supported against the yen on news of the bankruptcy of a Japanese financing company. The news stimulated traders speculation that the Bank of Japan will not raise interest rates in the near term.

The dollar continued its appreciation against other major currencies Tuesday. The dollar rose as traders sold yen against several currencies on expectation that the Bank of Japan quarterly business survey, which was due on Friday will show slow economic growth. This prompted speculation that the Bank of Japan will not raise interest rates. However, the dollar came under pressure, following comments by a Ford Motor Company official, which encouraged profit taking. Comments indicated that if the dollar/yen exchange rate continues its appreciation, U.S. exporters will pressure the government to weaken the dollar to increase competitiveness of U.S. commodities.

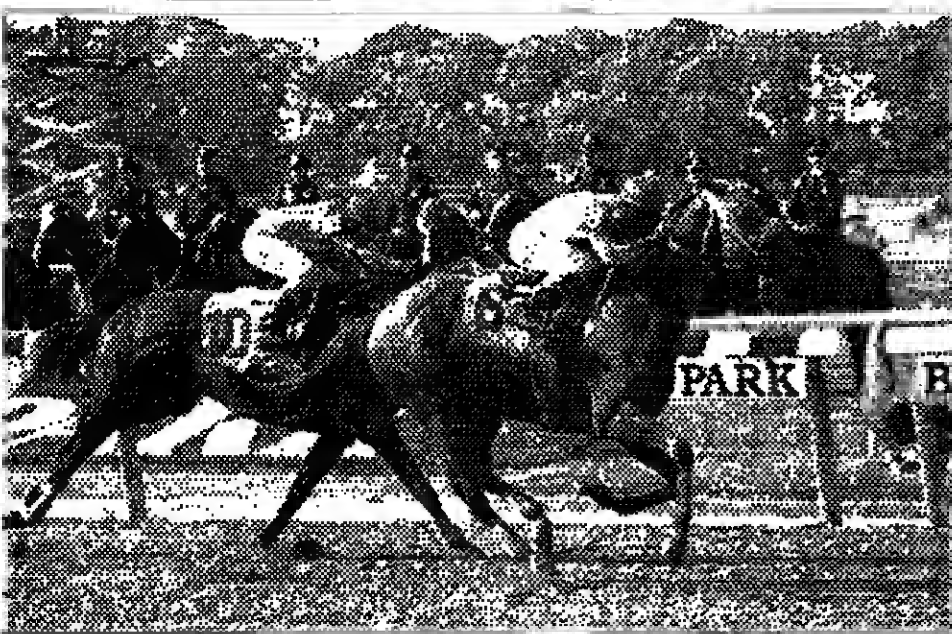
The dollar appreciated against the yen, while it stabilised against the mark and sterling Wednesday. Traders kept activities to a minimum awaiting important economic statistics regarding U.S. May employment data and Japan quarterly business survey. The dollar rose against the yen on speculation that the Bank of Japan report will show slow economic growth. On the other hand, officials at Chrysler Corporation agreed with the comments expressed earlier by Ford Motor Company, which put the dollar under some pressure.

The U.S. unit continued its appreciation marginally against the yen and sterling, while it depreciated slightly against the mark Thursday. Activities remained slow ahead of releasing economic reports in the U.S. and Japan, which were due on the following day. The dollar rose against the yen on speculation of slow economic growth in Japan, and of a large increase in the non-farm payrolls in the U.S. In addition, the dollar appreciated against sterling after the Bank of England cut the base lending rate to 5.75 per cent. On the other hand, the dollar's depreciation against the mark was mainly attributed to sterling selling against the mark.

The U.S. unit continued its appreciation moderately against other major currencies at the end of the week. The dollar appreciated following the release of U.S. May employment data showing a large increase of 348,000 person in non-farm payrolls. Moreover, the unemployment rate rose by a mere 0.2 per cent in May to reach 5.6 per cent. However, the Bank of Japan report showed better than expected results, which stimulated traders speculation that the Bank of Japan might raise interest rates. This encouraged traders to cover short yen positions against the dollar and the mark.

The U.S. unit, thus, ended the week at 1.5368 marks, 109.28 yen and at \$1.5880 to the pound.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDANIAN											
TELEPHONE: 607111 / 607170											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 09/06/1996											
LAST 12 MONTHS		COMPANY'S NAME	P / R	QTY.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADING CD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW										
250.000	208.000	ABAS BANK	12.2	1.57	9	280	62441	223.50	223.50	-.50	
4.800	4.180	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.1	3.24	4	2075	8941	4.33	4.33	-.01	
2.700	2.220	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.1	6.24	1	2008	2257	2.23	2.24	-.02	
5.300	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	11.8	3.14	4	2170	9841	4.38	4.40	-.02	
3.800	2.600	JOR. KOWAT BANK	19.9	0.22	4	786	2071	2.72	2.75	-.03	
1.400	.920	JOR. GUPT BANK	19.9	0.22	21	1573	14780	.97	.97		
4.000	3.700	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	19.8	0.00	1	2820	3885	3.70	3.70		
4.280	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.5	0.00	11	7107	21400	3.85	3.86	-.01	
4.000	2.000	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	17.4	0.00	3	4247	8260	2.00	1.98	-.02	
4.000	1.900	TRF. BUSINESS BK.	9.2	0.00	3	3500	6650	1.90	1.90		
3.850	2.420	BETT. AL-WAR. (BETINA)	1.8	5.26	3	3126	1133	2.75	2.75		
3.220	.410	AMMAN BANK INV.	9	0.00	48	67200	20875	2.44	2.46	-.02	
5.850	4.700	ABAS BANKING CO.	25.1	0.00	5	479	2279	4.70	4.65	-.05	
1.930	1.070	WILLIAMS. INV. BK.	6	0.00	12	13384	15682	1.16	1.20	-.02	
MARK SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 176.68 %CHG: -0.09											
2.910	2.300	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	6.6	8.70	2	290	460	2.30	2.30		
2.810	2.100	JOR. ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.9	7.62	2	225	263	2.10	2.10		
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 123.98 %CHG: 0.00											
1.900	1.530	JOR. ELECTRIC SUP.	10.8	7.49	40	36550	28862	1.56	1.56		
1.580	1.140	TRID. ELECTRICITY	8.9	7.35	3	600	811	1.30	1.36	-.02	
7.100	6.880	VEHIC. OWNERS FID.	14.8	6.06	2	29664	195782	6.60	6.60		
7.220	4.900	ABAS INVEST. FID.	16.3	3.11	2	160	788	5.00	4.80	-.20	
2.610	1.140	WATL. PORTFOLIO	0	0.00	26	7930	12808	1.37	1.36	-.01	
1.160	.900	RSAL ESTATE INV.	22.1	0.38	2	1600	945	.92	.95	-.03	
1.290	.880	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	18.7	0.03	1	880	445	.88	.89	-.01	
2.460	.610	RACH. MFG. REINT. MAIN.	9	0.00	1	3000	7280	.60	.76	-.04	
2.460	1.700	ATL. EAST HOTELS	88.3	0.00	4	1680	4027	2.08	2.05	-.03	
3.650	3.050	JOR. INTL. INV. CONC.	12.7	6.23	2	1850	244	3.21	3.21		
1.800	.980	ZAKA EDUCATION	4	0.00	5	2600	2477	1.01	1.03	-.02	
2.840	1.870	UNIFIED CO.	10.9	4.83	29	7200	18076	2.04	2.07	-.03	
1.200	.820	UNION LAND DEV.	8	0.00	13	7650	7820	1.03	1.04	-.01	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 114.95 %CHG: -0.77											
3.950	3.270	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	20.0	2.06	57	34070	118962	3.45	3.50	-.04	
5.950	4.750	ABAS POTASH CO.	16.0	3.79	3	2900	13200	5.30	5.28	-.02	
10.770	8.900	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	13.6	5.91	36	1110	113026	20.10	10.15	-.05	
8.400	7.000	JOR. WASTED MILLS	9.1	3.52	2	101	710	7.05	7.10	-.05	
3.660	3.410	ARAB BANK. MARY.	19.7	5.89	52	10521	37422	2.50	3.58	-.08	
5.000	4.900	JOR. CEMENT IND.	7.7	4.03	2	50	710	6.20	6.20		
2.460	2.160	JORDAN DAIRY	13.8	0.67	2	250	40	2.25	2.25		
2.550	1.620	RAFA INDUSTRIES	1	0.00	1	250	411	1.66	1.66		
8.260	4.710	JOR. ALUMINA OF. INV.	14.1	0.88	4	900	4668	5.21	5.15	-.06	
6.250	4.130	ABAS ALUM. IND.	6.5	9.69	11	493	6162	4.71	4.11		
.740	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	0	0.00	10	24950	4026	.58	.61	-.03	
1.500	1.280	ARAB PAPER COV. LTD.	0.2	8.56	13	3700	5518	1.27	1.27		
2.850	2.220	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	0	0.00	2	2100	2545	1.23	1.21	-.02	
1.450	.810	NATIONAL INTR.	12.3	7.23	22	6250	5293	.62	.62		
1.670	1.360	INTERNED. PETRO. CHGR.	0	0.00	73	34150	5131	1.42	1.41	-.01	
5.090	3.650	WATL. CABLE REGR. MFR	21.3	0.00	4	1500	8425	3.65	3.50	-.04	
1.770	.950	JOR. SULPHUR-CHGR	0	0.00	13	7050	7122	1.01	1.01		
2.410	2.080	ARAB PHARM. CONC.	29.6	0.00	67	39100	62915	1.50	1.53	-.03	
3.450	2.980	UNIV. HOUS. CONC.	7.6	7.82	6	1500	3605	2.52	2.52		
2.320	1.380	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	19.3	0.00	42	46100	7159	1.55	1.54	-.01	
2.000	1.000	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	32.9	0.00	104	52300	62055	1.19	1.12	-.07	
2.500	1.780	AL-ZAY. READY WEAR	0	0.00	18	2758	13095	1.82	1.94	-.07	
1.580	1.180	ARAB TOBACCO	29.6	0.00	15	7521	6064	1.26	1.26		
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 113.45 %CHG: +0.43											
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 146.68 %CHG: +0.08											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 09/06/1996											
1.870	.700	JOR. TRADE FAC.	19.5	0.00	6	31000	25360	.72	.71	-.01	
1.340	1.050	JOR. INVEST. FID.	27.9	0.00	8	22150	25328	1.04	1.04		
1.000	.760	UNION INV. FID.	76.5	0.00	11	60870	12545	.80	.80		
1.480	.630	ARAB WAT. TRD.	0	0.00	26	25950	20219	.75	.77	-.01	
.690	.340	JOR. INDUS. MATCH-IMPED	0	0.00	14	10544	6405	.59	.59		
1.430	.630	ARAB FOOD & MED.	2	0.00	5	784	1258	.66	.68		
1.930	1.380	NATL. CARBONATE	3	0.00	7	5250	8248	1.55	1.59	.02	
.850	.520	ARAB INTL. INV. LTD.	0	0.00	11	7025	4403	1.40	.93	-.09	
1.180	.600	NATL. PETROLE.	0	0.00	13	1271	8059	.93	.71	-.02	
1.700	.700	JORDAN. WAT. SUP. CONC.	0	0.00	13	12980	9889	.76	.77	.01	
1.150	.870	NAZAR DIES & MACHS	5	0.00	1	250	148	.58	.53	-.05	
1.150	.800	JORDAN STEEL	0	0.00	16	6950	7257	.80	.82	-.02	
.990	.570	ARAB ELECT. INDUS.	0	0.00	2	287	283	.72	.72		
1.150	1.100	UNION KARBASO FID	0	0.00	10	4330	4233	1.11	1.24	.03	
1.150	.680	RAZI PHARM. 65%	5	0.00	4	15200	5732	.77	.73	-.02	
.970	.560	INDUS. ENG.	35.7	0.00	8	3703	3248	.77	.68	-.03	
1.520	.880	INDUS. CERAMIC	0	0.00	1	5000	2900	.88	.89	.01	
1.050	.680	AL-ZAY. READY WEAR	0	0.00	1	5000	2800	.54	.58	.02	
.970	.710	NATL. POULTRY FID	0	0.00	1	500	235	.71	.71		
1.500	.680	MID. EAST COMEST.	8.3	0.00	63	78700	5451	.68	.71	.03	
GRAND TOTAL											
220 272901 166853											
f = New 12 months high											
s = New 12 months low											
S = Stock dividend during the past 12 months											
L = Listed during the past 12 months											
P/R = P/E ratio is 100 or more											
N = Negative P/E											
E = Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year											



Editor's Note (center left) takes the last turn neck and neck with Skip Away (center right) to win the 128th running of the Belmont Stakes at Belmont Park racetrack in Elmont, June 8. (Reuters photo)

Editor's Note wins Belmont

ELMONT, NEW YORK (R) — Editor's Note, the mischievous underachiever of this year's 3-year-old class, zig-zagged from the back of the pack under substitute rider Rene Douglas to win the \$729,800, 1-1/2-mile Belmont Stakes by a length Saturday.

The winning time was two minutes, 28-4/5 seconds for the third and final leg of the triple crown series.

Breakneck Stakes runner-up Skip Away was second, and the filly my flag, bidding to become the third distaff winner, finished

third. Louis Quatorze was fourth, followed by Prince Of Thieves, Rocket Flash, Natural Selection, Jamies First Punch, In Contention, Traffic Circle, Saratoga Dandy and Appealing Skier.

Editor's Note, known for his obstreperous behaviour, had not won in nine races.

It was the third straight Belmont Stakes triumph for trainer D. Wayne Lukas, as well as Lukas' seventh triple crown victory in eight races.

The race was marred by an injury to Kentucky

Derby runner-up Cavonnier, the 3-1 Belmont Stakes favourite. Trainer Bob Baffert said the injury appeared to be a strained ligament. He said he did not believe the injury was life-threatening, but could end the gelding's career.

English shipper South Salem also was eased in the race but walked off the track.

Gary Stevens, who was originally designated to ride Editor's Note, was told earlier this week that he needs rotator cuff surgery that will sideline him a minimum of

Sonics hope homecourt will turn things around

SEATTLE (R) — The Seattle SuperSonics hope their return home for Game 3 of the NBA finals will give them the little extra boost they need — especially at the guard position — to win a game.

Gary Payton, along with forward Shawn Kemp one of Seattle's two main men all year, has been held in check by the Chicago Bulls, who have come at him in waves.

"I think Chicago's number one priority is Gary Payton," Seattle coach George Karl said at the Sonics' light practice Saturday. "Every time he drives there are four guys coming at him."

While Kemp has carried his part of the scoring load, scoring 32 and 29 points in the losses in Chicago, Payton has scored just 13 in each game. At the other starting guard spot, Hersey Hawkins has tallied nine and 16.

In Chicago's backcourt, Michael Jordan has been Michael Jordan, scoring 28 and 29 points, while Ron Harper has netted a useful 15 and 12 points.

The letdown for Seattle basically has been the beleaguered Payton's output.

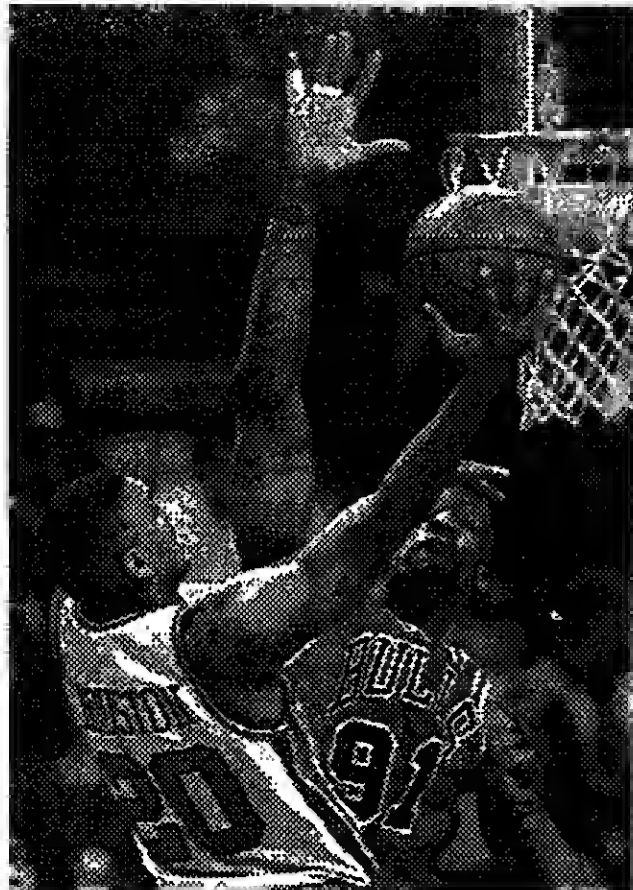
"I think they're figuring that if they can stop me from doing a lot of things, it will neutralise our team a lot," said Payton.

"Scottie (Pippen), when he guards me, what he tries to do is stay big and hopefully I won't be in the post-ups," said Payton. "Harper, (back-up guard Randy) Brown and Jordan, when they guard me, they try to muscle me and put their forearms on me and everything."

"And then when I basically go to the basket, there's always a lot of help. I always see (backup centre bill) Wennington. I always see (forward Dennis) Rodman."

"I think he is doing ok," said Karl. "I have all the confidence in the world in Gary Payton. I think he will have a big game tomorrow. I think he will go after Harper."

A big part of Payton's problem is the absence of



Dennis Rodman of the Chicago Bulls tries to block a shot by his opponent

backup guard Nate McMillan due to a herniated disc. That has meant Payton has had to play heavy minutes, mostly at the point guard position rather than the shooting guard position where Payton could think more about scoring.

"I've got to be the general of this team. They're trying to concentrate on keeping me out of this game, so I have to do other things," said Payton.

"I can't worry about scoring 20 or 30 points. Shawn is having a great series and we've got to keep going to him. When they're trying to neutralise me like that, I think Shawn, Detlef (Schrempf) and Hawk have got to step up," said Payton.

"He is doing all he can," said Seattle's veteran centre Sam Perkins of Payton.

"The ball has been taken out of his hands sometimes. We don't have a player that can pick up what Gary can do. He is now being guarded by

bigger people and he has to make the adjustment."

Hawkins admits his offensive production has been hurt in part by the considerable distraction of his duties — shared with several teammates — of guarding the unstoppable Jordan.

"Of course it takes something away," said Hawkins. "I think that's only natural. I think you still have to find a way to suck it up and be aggressive on the offensive end and make him (Jordan) work. You give a night off on defence and he's going to kill you on the other side of the court."

Both sides agree the Sonics, just two losses away from being swept, have played pretty well while Chicago has not played up to the form of its record-setting 72-win regular season — except for a couple of brief stretches that proved to be the difference in both Bulls wins.

Britain wants to host World Cup, Olympics

LONDON (R) — The British government, delighted with the trouble-free start of the European soccer championship, said on Sunday it hopes Euro 96 will pave the way for a bid for the World Cup in 2006 and the Olympic games two years later.

It pledged full government support, including money from the national lottery, if needed to win the games for Britain.

Heritage secretary (minister) Virginia Bottomley wrote in the Sunday Express that after the 2002 World Cup co-hosted by Japan and South Korea "it will be time for the great championship to return to football's original home — Britain".

In a full-page article, Bottomley said 2006 would mark the 40th anniversary of the year England last won the World Cup.

"If this European championship is the triumph I believe it will be, I want Britain to build on that success," she wrote.

"It would be brilliant if we could play host to the World Cup in 2006, and the Olympics not long after that."

"If the football association decide to make a bid for the World Cup in 10 years' time — they say they are shortly to make a decision — this government will back them all the way."

"And if it takes lottery money to attract the Olympic games to Britain in 2008, we are ready to spend it."

England was given the chance to stage Euro 96 as a reward for the huge steps it took to rid the domestic sport of fan hooliganism after the 1985 Heysel Stadium disaster. But officials are still worried at the threat of soccer violence.

Police have set up a vast security operation, with intelligence on fans' movements between each of the eight English cities where games will be played relayed rapidly between regional police headquarters.

There has also been a highly-publicised series of arrests before the championship, with known trouble-makers targeted.

But the first game of the tournament, when Switzerland held England to a 1-1 draw, was quiet, with police reporting just 23 arrests around the ground. "The officers in charge were very, very pleased," said a police spokesman on Saturday.

The tournament, with 16 teams, including six of the 1994 World Cup quarter-finalists, is the second most important in soccer. Millions of television viewers in 194 countries are expected to follow the action.

But the organisers know that if the focus turns from on-pitch play to pitched battles in the streets, their chances of a World Cup bid will be doomed.

Bottomley's support will not go unquestioned.

The opposition Labour party, which is far ahead in opinion polls with an election due in the next year, has been highly critical of the government's creation of the lottery, saying the profits of its private operators are too high.

Labour has also accused the government of Prime Minister John Major of being grudging in its support of Euro 96, leaving local authorities to pick up much of the bill.

But Bottomley, who was at Saturday's opening match, shrugged off Labour's attacks on sports funding and the lottery.

"More money has been ploughed into sport under this government than any other..." she wrote defiantly.

"The prime minister and I are determined that we don't have to wait another 30 years before we once again play host to the sporting nations of the world."

Piggott legend lives on in Epsom Derby

LONDON (R) — The legend of Lester Piggott lives on in the Epsom Derby.

"It felt like riding a 10th derby winner," the Epsom Maestro said after Saturday's victory of Shaamit, the colt he told his son-in-law, trainer Willie Haggas, was worth entering late for the great race.

Piggott, 60, spotted the lightly raced colt's potential in a spring canter and gave jockey Michael Hills tips on how to ride one of the world's most difficult tracks with its unique twists and turns.

Hills, riding his first British classic winner at the age of 33, confessed that he was forced in a rough race to ignore some of the advice.

"Lester told me to stay on the inside but I broke his rule. I had to pull wide or I wouldn't have got a run," he confessed after the 12-1 shot defeated 9-2 favourite Dushyantor and Sheikh Mohammed's 25-1 shot Shantou.

But he did obey to the letter Piggott's advice as the field swept down the hill towards the straight. "Let them flow up to you at Tattenham corner, then just ride your race as you see it."

Like last year's winner Lammtarra, Shaamit was making his seasonal debut after being plagued by injury.

It was a remarkable training achievement by the 35-year-old Haggas, who was saddling his first derby runner.

He was wise enough in April to ask Piggott to ride Shaamit in training to decide if it was worth Dubai businessman Khalifa Dasmal spending 8,000 pounds (\$12,380) as a supplementary entrance fee.

Piggott, who had ridden three of his nine derby winners before Haggas's wife Maureen was even born, was quick to tell the trainer: "Yes, he is worth it. Go for it."

The Taciturn Piggott was uncharacteristically ebullient after Shaamit stormed into the lead one and a half furlongs (300 metres) out to land the prize with a classy burst of acceleration.

Alex Greaves made history, becoming the first woman in the 217-year history of the race to ride in the Derby.

White Sox beat Orioles; Rockies overcome Braves

BALTIMORE (R) — Danny Tartabull hit a two-run triple in the first inning and James Baldwin and four relievers combined on a nine-inning shutout to help the Chicago White Sox edged the Baltimore Orioles 2-1 on Saturday.

Orioles' starter Kent Mercker (3-4) retired the first two batters of the game before giving up a single to Frank Thomas and a double to Lyle Mouton. Tartabull followed with a triple to tie the score in the center field, scoring both runners.

In Boston, second baseman Jeff Frye's error allowed Kevin Koslofski to score and lifted the Milwaukee Brewers to a 3-2 win over the Boston Red Sox in 10 innings.

With one out Koslofski doubled off reliever Joe Hudson (0-2). Eric Gunderson relieved Hudson and Frye booted a ground ball by Dave Nilsson for Boston's fourth error of the game.

Koslofski had been called up from triple-A New Orleans earlier in the day.

The Brewers sent the game into extra innings with two runs in the eighth.

In Cleveland, Orel Hershiser and Julian Tavarez combined on a six-hit shutout and Manny Ramirez homered and had two RBI as the Cleveland Indians blanked the California Angels 5-0.

Hershiser (5-4) gave up four hits and one walk with four strikeouts after surrendering 12 runs and 18 hits in his last two starts, totaling 5-2/3 innings. Opponents were batting .341 against Hershiser entering today.

In Detroit, John Flaherty hit a bases-clearing double and scored on a single by Kimera Barte in a four-run third inning to open an 8-2 lead for Detroit and the Tigers survived four New York Yankees homers and held on to beat the Yankees 9-7.

It was the second straight win for the

Tigers, who last won two straight games April 13th and 14th against California.

Barte and Chad Curtis had three hits.

Bernie Williams hit two solo homers for the Yankees.

In Kansas City, Bip Roberts drove in a season-high four runs and four teammates drove in a pair of runs as the Kansas City Royals outslugged the Seattle Mariners 12-8 for their third straight win.

Starter Kevin Appier (5-6) laboured through six innings to snap a personal two-game losing streak, but allowed six runs, five earned — and 12 hits.

At Minnesota, Pat Meares hit a two-run homer in the sixth inning and Rich Robertson allowed two runs over 6-2/3 innings to lead the Minnesota Twins to a 4-2 victory over the Oakland Athletics in the first game of a doubleheader.

Chuck Knoblauch and Roberto Kelly had two hits apiece for the Twins, who have won six of their last seven games and climbed back to the .500 mark.

In the second game, George Williams hit a grand slam and three teammates also homered as Oakland defeated the Twins, 13-7, to salvage a split on the day.

The A's trailed 3-2 entering the fifth inning but broke out for six runs against Twins starter Pat Mahomes (1-4). Brent Gates put Oakland ahead 4-3 with his second homer of the season, a two-run shot.

Williams then hit his second career grand slam, off Twins reliever Greg Hansell, to extend the lead.

At Texas, Darren Oliver used pinpoint control and allowed just five hits en route to his first career shutout as the Texas Rangers defeated the Toronto Blue Jays, 2-0.

Oliver (5-2) threw 87 of his 114 pitches for strikes, did not walk a batter and

scattered five singles. It was the first complete game for the converted reliever.

Rockies hold on to beat Braves

Walt Weiss drew a two-out bases-loaded walk to snap an eighth-inning tie and the Colorado Rockies held on for their third straight win, a wild 13-12 victory over the Atlanta Braves on Saturday.

Atlanta took a 12-11 lead in the top of the eighth and gave the ball to reliever Greg McMichael, who walked leadoff batter Eric Young before striking out Ellis Burks as young stole second and continued to third on catcher Eddie Perez's throwing error.

Dante Bichette lifted a sacrifice fly, to centre, scoring Young with the tying run. Larry Walker, who homered twice, singled for his fourth hit before Mark Wohlers replaced McMichael. A walk and an infield single loaded the bases bringing Weiss up.

In Chicago, Amaury Telemaco allowed four runs in six-plus innings and Mark Grace drove in three runs to lead the Chicago Cubs to a 6-4 victory over the Montreal Expos in a game played through a heavy fog.

Telemaco (3-2) allowed nine hits, walked one and struck out seven.

"This is the first time I've had my slider since I was called up to the big leagues," Telemaco said.

In Houston, Craig Biggio belted a three-run homer to snap a seventh-inning tie and Derrick May drove in four runs as the Houston Astros defeated the Philadelphia Phillies, 7-3.

"I just got a fastball that was down and I turned on it," said Biggio. "It was a good win for us, because the Phillies are a good team."

In New York, Jeff Kent had a two-run single, Todd Hundley hit a two-run homer, and the New

York Mets finally provided Mark Clark with offensive support as they held on for a 7-6 victory over the Florida Marlins.

In San Francisco, Stan Javier's three-run double with two outs in the eighth inning off Todd Stottlemyre broke a tie and lifted the San Francisco Giants to a 4-1 win over the St. Louis Cardinals.

San Francisco won for just the fifth time in 12 games.

Stottlemyre (5-4) pitched his third complete game in the last three weeks and allowed four runs and five hits.

In Los Angeles, Delino Deshields singled home Milt Thompson with one out in the bottom of the 10th inning as the Los Angeles Dodgers edged the Cincinnati Reds, 5-4, for their fourth straight victory in extra-inning games.

Thompson led off the 10th with an infield single and stole second after Juan Castro flew out. Pinch-hitter Mike Busch drew a walk to chase reliever Hector Carrasco (1-1). Deshields greeted Mike Remlinger by ripping his first pitch into left-centre to end the game.

Cincinnati scored three runs in the seventh to tie the game 4-4.

In San Diego, Al Martin's two-run homer in the top of the 14th inning snapped a tie as the Pittsburgh Pirates edged the San Diego Padres 9-8 in the longest game this season.

Carlos Garcia, who had four hits, led off the 14th with a single off Willie Blair (0-3) and Martin followed with his ninth home run to give the Pirates a 9-7 lead.

The Padres came back in the bottom of the 14th inning with a double and a single to score one run, but Jody Reed popped out to second base to end the five-hour three-minute game.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAN HERRICK

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FIFTH ROUND KNOCKOUT

Neither vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ 4 2
♥ Q J 2
♦ A K J 7
♣ J 8
WEST
♠ A 9 6
♥ 3
♦ 8 8 5
♣ A K Q 7 6 4
SOUTH
♠ A Q J 6 3

♠ A 10 4
♥ Q 10 2
♦ 5 3
♣ 2
The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ 2♣ 3♠ 4♠
Pass Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: King of ♠.

The language of bridge is colorful and expressive. The game has not shied away from borrowing suitable terminology from other sporting

fields. The defensive technique applied by West on this hand derives its name from boxing. It is known as an "uppercut."

Because of the minimum opening bid, South rebid the spades rather than raise to three diamonds, which would have been more encouraging. The final contract of four spades would have been made more often than out, since few Wests would have had the courage to violate a cardinal taboo and execute the winning defense.

West led the king of clubs, and paused to assess the situation. Only 12 high-card points were not in sight, and it was certain that South held every one of them. The defense, therefore, could expect at best two club tricks and the ace of trumps from their high cards. The setting trick would have to be

developed from spot cards, and the only suit to offer any hope was trumps. If East had no more than 10 x in spades, there was a chance.

After cashing the ace of clubs at trick two, West continued with a third round of the suit, giving declarer a useless ruff-suit. To preserve trump length, South ruffed in dummy and discarded a red suit from hand.

A trump to the jack lost to the ace, and West delivered the killing blow — another club. East alertly joined the act by ruffing with the ten of spades, and declarer was forced to bow the knee. The inevitable was delayed a moment when declarer overruled with the queen, but now West was poised with the 9 8 of trumps behind declarer's K 5, and the second trump trick for the defenders spelled down one.

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Martial arts ceremony held as part of Japan Week

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Japanese Crown Prince Takamodo Sunday attended a special ceremony held at Prince Rashed's Centre for Self-Defence Sports at Al Hussein Youth City during which the Japanese ambassador to Jordan Takayuki Kimura presented 50-million Japanese Yen worth of in-kind contribution to the Jordanian Judo Federation (JJF).



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, and His Imperial Highness Prince Takamodo Sunday attend the martial arts ceremony at Prince Rashed Centre (Petra photo)

Addressing the ceremony, which was organised by the JJF on the sidelines of Japan Week in Jordan, Prince Hassan thanked Prince Takamodo for the generous Japanese donation, noting that his presence at this ceremony translates Japan's efforts to support this kind of sports.

On his part, Prince Takamodo expressed his happiness in attending this ceremony, saying that it represents one of the most important events of the Japan Week in Jordan. He voiced hope that both countries will be able through sports and other areas of cooperation to further enhance mutual cooperation between them.

The ceremony, which included performances in judo and martial arts, was also attended by Minister of Youth Mohammad Dawoudieh and JJF President Sharif Ali Hassan.

Euro '96

Germany win but at a high cost, substitute saves Spain from defeat

ENGLAND (AFP) — Germany beat Czech Republic 2-0 here on Sunday in their opening Euro 96 match, but have paid a high price for their efforts.

First half goals from Andreas Moeller and Christian Ziege earned Germany victory, but the injured Jürgen Kohler will play no more part in the tournament.

Germany also had six players booked, including Stefan Reuter and Ziege, in this Old Trafford Group C match could cause them suspension problems later in the tournament.

Although it was far from being a hard match English referee David Elleray was taking no nonsense. Four Czech players were also booked.

It was a bitter blow for coach Bertie Vogts when experienced Borussia Dortmund defender Kohler, skipper in place of injured Jürgen Klinsmann, left the pitch in the 10th minute. His left knee was immediately strapped up and defender Markus Babel replaced him.

News came from German delegation spokesman Wolfgang Niersbach during the second half that Kohler was flying back to Germany on Monday for treatment.

From the moment Kohler left the field, Germany began to step up the pressure.

Fredy Bobic, forming a strike partnership with Turkey-based Stefan Kuntz, had the first real chance for either side in the 17th minute. Fed by Matthias Sammer, Bobic hit a spectacular volley from 10 yards, forcing keeper Petr Kouba to make an impressive reflex save.

Moller had a chance from the ensuing corner and later Thomas Hassler had time to tee himself up from the edge of the box, but shot just wide. Then Germany's left-wing back Ziege swung in from the left, swept past defender Miroslav Kadlec to fire into the bottom left-hand corner from the edge of the box in the 25th minute.

Moments later Ziege was lucky not to be sent off for a foul on Karel Poborsky. In the end Elleray only produced a yellow card from his pocket.



Germany's Andy Moeller celebrates after scoring 2-0 for Germany during a European soccer championships group C match Germany vs Czech Republic (Reuters photo)

post. Ziege nearly hit his second goal in the 57th minute when his header hit the post as the Czechs maintained their sloppy marking.

Bobic, who had few chances up front, was substituted in the 65th minute, giving Bayern Munich striker Thomas Strunz a chance to prove himself.

In an earlier match, Substitute Alfonso Perez saved Spain from defeat on their opening Euro 96 match with his first touch of the ball, touching home a 74th minute equaliser to give them a 1-1 draw against Bulgaria Sunday.

Alfonso, who came on seconds before scoring, was just inside the six-yard box when he turned a shot from the left by Sergi Barjuan past goalkeeper Boris Mihailov.

Sergi's involvement in the equaliser redeemed the Barcelona defender from his part in Bulgaria's goal nine minutes earlier in the Group B clash when he brought down Emil Kostadinov and Hristo Stoichkov converted the penalty.

Bulgaria were a man short when Spain equalised. Sweeper Petar Hubechev was shown the red card two minutes earlier for pulling down Jose Luis Cuminero just outside the penalty area.

Spain striker Juan Pizzi was also dismissed two minutes after the equaliser for a foul on young Bulgarian defender Radostin Kishishev.

Kafelnikov wins French crown

PARIS (AFP) — Yevgeny Kafelnikov discovered what winning one of the biggest prizes in tennis means when he became the first Russian to win a Grand Slam singles crown at the French Open here Sunday.

And Germany's beaten finalist Michael Stich, who had already known his hour of glory at Wimbledon in 1991, rediscovered what he called "a love of sport."

Kafelnikov, 22, scored a 7-6 (7/4), 7-5, 7-6 (7/4) victory in a fascinating two-and-a-half hour duel played on a sun-baked Roland Garros centre-court.

And then, with his voice trembling with emotion, the 17-year-old champion told the 15,500 spectators: "This is the most glorious day of my life."

He then dedicated his triumph to his family, who watched the final on TV

back home in the Black Sea resort Sochi, and also to his coach Anatoly Leshchin and girlfriend Marcia who had seen his triumph from the players' box.

"I have to thank Michael for letting me win here," he concluded, adding: "I hope he has many more chances to win many more Grand Slam tournaments."

Stich, who addressed the crowd in French, said: "I didn't let Yevgeny win here. He played so well he deserved to win...but he'll have to learn French now."

The 27-year-old German then won tremendous applause when he added pointedly: "I lost a tennis match today — but I have rediscovered my love of sport."

Stich was referring to his new outlook on the game following his long injury lay-off after badly damag-

ing his ankle while playing in Vienna last October.

Such had to be talked into playing the event by coach Sven Groeneweld because he was worried he "might look an idiot" playing on clay without proper preparation.

But his new "playing for fun" attitude and freshness after playing only four tournaments and ten matches since his Austrian mishap, paid dividends. He beat the defending champion Thomas Muster of Austria in the fourth-round and never looked back.

Stich, the world's number two ranked player in 1993 but currently 16th in the rankings, had his chances against Kafelnikov — but failed to take them.

He led 5-2 in the second set, before losing six games in a row, and then went 3-1 clear in the third, before

Kafelnikov clawed his way back.

The only other Russian player ever to reach a Grand Slam tournament final was Alex Metreveli (now of Georgia) who was beaten by Czech Jan Kodes in the 1973 Wimbledon final.

Sunday's victory means that the 22-year-old kafelnikov won both the singles and men's doubles events.

The last player to achieve that feat was Australian Ken Rosewall back in 1968.

"I think playing the doubles really helped me," said Kafelnikov, who ended the hopes of world number-one Pete Sampras in the semi-finals.

"You know it is a wonderful feeling winning. It was very special. In shall never forget today."

Fernandez and Davenport end champions' doubles reign

PARIS (AFP) — Fourth-seeds Mary Joe Fernandez and Lindsay Davenport of the United States notched up a major surprise when they beat defending champions Gigi Fernandez of the United States and Natasha Zvereva of Belarus in straight-sets to win the women's doubles title at the French Open tennis championships here Sunday.

Fernandez and Davenport never looked back after a brisk start and scored a 6-2, 6-1 win in just 65 minutes under blazing sunshine on the Roland Garros centre-court. It was the first-ever meeting between the two teams and Davenport's volleying and Fernandez' baseline retrieving made the difference.

The victory thwarted the record bid by the second-seeded Gigi Fernandez and Zvereva to win the title five



Mary-Joe Fernandez (L) and Lindsay Davenport of the USA hold the cup after winning the Women's doubles at the French Open tennis championships at Roland Garros stadium June 9. Fernandez/Davenport defeated Gigi Fernandez of the USA and Natash Zvereva of Belarus 6-2 6-1 (Reuters photo)

straight years. They currently share the record of four consecutive

wins with Americans Shirley Fry and Doris Hart (1950-1951, 1952, 1953)

and Martina Navratilova and Pam Shriver (1984, 1985, 1986, 1987).

Ethiopia wants changes at Atlanta

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Ethiopia is pushing on with its campaign for a change of programme at the Atlanta Olympics to allow its top female runner, Derartu Tulu, to go for gold in both the 10,000 and 5,000 metres.

Chief athletics coach Woldemeskel Kostre said Ethiopia was still lobbying the games organisers, the international Olympic committee (IOC) and the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF).

"We don't see there is any problem to change," Woldemeskel said on Saturday, reiterating Ethiopia's point that the IAAF had already adjusted the programme to help American Michael Johnson's bid to win both the 200 and 400 metres.

"So why not for us, for Africans? Is it because we are not Americans? Because we are not white?" he asked. The row over Derartu, a gold medalist at the

Barcelona games in 1992, boiled up last month. The IAAF strongly denied earlier Ethiopian charges of racism and said the request for a change to lengthen the interval between heats for the two distances had been made too late.

But Woldemeskel said Ethiopia had made verbal appeals for months and had put the request in writing after the Copenhagen world road relay championships in April.

"This would be a promotion of women's athletics," he said. The coach said if the bid to change the dates of the qualifying heats in Atlanta failed, Derartu would still take part in one race.

"We are not withdrawing but unfortunately she will run in only one event," he said.

"If the problem is not resolved I will stick with the 10,000," Derartu said after a training session in Addis Ababa on Saturday. She rejected suggestions

by the IAAF that an attempt on both distances in the heat and humidity of Atlanta would be physically risky.

"That is not true, so long as they change the programme," the 24-year-old said.

Woldemeskel said Ethiopia's final team for Atlanta would be announced closer to July 5, the deadline for registrations.

It would include about 25 competitors, all runners apart from two boxers, he said.

The male star is the world record holder at 5,000 and 10,000 metres, Haile Gebreselassie. He said after the same training session that he was still on course to compete in both events at Atlanta and had no injury problems.

"We don't like to say anything about the possible result but we will be prepared and then we will try our best," he said.

New fraud accusations against Graf

BONN (AFP) — German weekly 'Der Spiegel' is to publish new fraud allegations against Steffi Graf in its Monday edition, claiming that she knew about the illegal tax schemes that landed her father in jail.

The German world women's tennis champion, who won her fifth French Open title Saturday, has always denied any knowledge of the 41 million deutschmark (\$27.3 million) tax fraud allegedly engineered by her father Peter.

But according to 'Der Spiegel', Horst Schmitt, a former advisor to the Graf's, allegedly deposited 20 million dm (\$14 million) of undeclared earnings belonging to Steffi in a Liechtenstein bank account.

Steffi Graf has earned an estimated 180 million deutschmarks in her 14 year professional career.

Opening victory crucial, says Romania coach

DURHAM, ENGLAND (R) — Romania coach Anghelo Iordanescu said a win against France in their first Euro 96 match was vital in a very strong group.

He considered Group B, which also includes Spain and Bulgaria, was one of the most balanced and strongest in the competition.

"Any one of the four teams has an equal chance. The first game is absolutely vital to set up a good platform," he said.

Romania's game with France in Newcastle on Monday followed Sunday's group opener between Spain and Bulgaria in Leeds.

Asked whether he might settle for a draw against in-form France, Iordanescu replied: "I would like to win my first match."

"We hope and will do our best to justify our exceptional performance in the '94 World Cup." Romania impressed with their stylish play in the United States and reached the quarter-finals.

Iordanescu said Romania's preparation had gone well, with four training sessions since the team arrived Monday.

Midfielder Ioan Sabau, who picked up a calf



Dutch defender Ronald de Boer catches a ball on his neck during a late evening training session at the St. Albans soccer club, June 8. The Netherlands playing in group A of the European soccer championships will play their first match, Monday against Scotland in Birmingham, June 10 (Reuters photo)

Monday's Euro '96 schedule on JTV

Holland vs. Scotland	6:30 p.m. channel 2
Romania vs. France	9:30 p.m. channel 2

Captain Gheorghe Hagi dismissed speculation over the reported presence of Newcastle United manager Kevin Keegan at a Romania training session and whether this meant a move from Barcelona was on the cards.

"I am not aware of any such likelihood and don't want to spend any time thinking about it. My first concern is the French team," he said.

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Netanyahu holds back key portfolios from hardliners

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu offered ultra-nationalist leader Rafael Eitan a broad economic portfolio Sunday, putting the headline former army chief out of the running for the key defence minister's job, Israel public radio reported.

Mr. Netanyahu met with Mr. Eitan on Sunday as part of accelerating efforts to form a government following his upset victory over Labour Prime Minister Shimon Peres in May 29 elections.

Mr. Eitan declined to comment directly on his eventual role in the new government, but said he and Mr. Netanyahu had discussed the possibility of combining two or more portfolios "that might not at first view seem connected."

Israel Radio said Mr. Eitan, head of the ultra-nationalist Tsomet Party and a fierce opponent of the Palestinian autonomy agreements, had been offered an enlarged and budget-rich portfolio covering unspecified economic responsibilities.

Mr. Netanyahu was due to meet Monday with another key hardliner in his Likud bloc, former Defence Minister

Ariel Sharon, who has been seeking either the defence minister's job or the powerful finance portfolio.

The roles going to Mr. Eitan and Mr. Sharon were being closely watched as a sign of how Mr. Netanyahu's government would approach the embattled peace process with Palestinians and Israel's Arab neighbours.

Israeli press reports have said Mr. Netanyahu would likely also renege Mr. Sharon, offering him another enlarged economic portfolio rather than the more powerful defence or finance jobs.

Mr. Netanyahu also met Sunday with David Levy, a political moderate who is expected to be named to the foreign minister's job which he held last time Likud was in power from 1988 to 1992.

Mr. Netanyahu has been negotiating for 11 days with religious parties and two small centrist groups whose support is needed to give him a workable majority in the Knesset, Israel's 120-seat parliament.

Pending the outcome of those talks he has kept silent on appointments to his cabinet and on the new government's policy guidelines.

Press leaks of a draft policy outline said the document in-

cluded four main points: a refusal of Palestinian independence or any division of Jerusalem, an expansion of Jewish settlement activity and a rejection of Syrian demands for the return of the occupied Golan Heights.

Negotiations continued meanwhile between Likud officials and the leaders of smaller parties who hold the key to building a majority in the Knesset.

In the May 29 polls, the Likud Party won only 32 seats, compared to 34 for Labour.

To obtain a majority, Likud is negotiating primarily with three orthodox and ultra-orthodox parties which have presented an extensive list of conditions for joining the coalition.

These ranged from substantial funding for housing and education for their communities to a stricter enforcement of religious laws, ranging from a ban on the sale of pork in Jewish areas to tight restrictions on abortion and the closure of all businesses, nightclubs and theatres on the Jewish Sabbath.

Likud Party officials said Mr. Netanyahu had rejected most of the religious de-

(Continued on page 7)

Regent, marking anniversary of Great Arab Revolt, urges revival of Arab renaissance

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Sunday that the Great Arab Revolt, which began in 1916, was a response to the needs of the Arab and Islamic nations to fulfill their national aspirations and end their subjugation to colonial powers.

In a statement on the eve of the Great Arab Revolt and Army Day, which falls Monday, the Regent said the anniversary should prompt Jordanians more than other Arabs to revive the idea of the great Arab renaissance which the Great Arab Revolt had sought to achieve.

"The Great Arab Revolt, led by the late Sharif Hussein Ben Ali and his Arab Legion, was not aimed at serving certain sectors of the Arab

World or in support of a certain group or to change their basic structures," the Regent said. "It reflected an overwhelming feeling for liberating the nation from colonial domination and help the Arabs assume their leading role in the region enjoying pluralism, democracy and justice."

Noting that the Arab Legion under Sharif Hussein Ben Ali's command was instrumental in propagating his message, the Prince said the same legion and later the Arab Army in Jordan helped keep the message alive and contributed to the accomplishment of many achievements.

"The Arab Army, he said, was successful in liberating the Arab Orient towards the end of World War I and had



sought to carry out the principles of pluralism and democracy in this part of the world.

The Regent said that the colonial powers succeeded in imposing their domination on the Arab region but despite

the lapse of decades of foreign domination the concept of Arab renaissance was dominant in the minds of the Arab people.

The Regent said the anniversary was an occasion for Jordan to reemphasise its identity as the nation that inherited the mission of the Great Arab Revolt and that the country's Hashemite leadership was legitimate for all Arabs favouring no ideology over another nor supporting one sect or group against another, but rather advocating pluralism and justice for all.

The anniversary of the Great Arab Revolt and Army Day has been declared a public holiday and all government departments and public institutions will remain closed.

Velayati in Syria with message

DAMASCUS (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati flew to Syria on Sunday for talks on regional developments following the Israeli elections last month.

Mr. Velayati told reporters he was carrying a message to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad from Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. Diplomats said he was to see Mr. Assad later on Sunday.

"Our ties with Syria are distinctive and contacts are also continuing. We found it was necessary to visit the sisterly state of Syria to discuss the developments following the recent changes to the region," Mr. Velayati said.

Mr. Velayati arrived a day after Mr. Assad, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah ended talks with a call for a major Arab summit in Cairo on June 21 to plot a response to Israel's new prime minister-elect, Benjamin Netanyahu, whose hardline policies could derail the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Diplomats said Mr. Velayati's talks might also cover Bahrain's accusation of Iranian involvement in a plot to topple the emirate's government.

Bahraini education minister Abdul Aziz Ben Mohamad Al Fadhel met Mr. Assad in Syria last Tuesday

(Continued on page 7)

Feasibility study is completed on inter-city railway

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan has completed a feasibility study on building a railway line linking Zarqa, Amman and Sweileh and is seeking international financing for the project, which is expected to cost \$65 million, Minister of Transport Naser Lawzi said Sunday.

Addressing a meeting held to discuss the plans, Mr. Lawzi said that the feasibility study, which cost \$360,000 and financed by the Austrian government and conducted by an Austrian firm, covered the construction of the railway line, which would branch out from the main line that links Amman with the Jordanian-Syrian border.

The Ministry of Transport is giving this project priority in order to boost public transport services within the Greater Amman region, the most densely populated sector of Jordan where public transport buses currently cover 50 to 60 per cent of the transport service, Mr. Lawzi said.

According to the minister, European governments and investors have expressed interest in the project.

Mr. Lawzi said that the Greater Amman Municipality

has also expressed willingness to contribute to this project, but agreement is still to be reached on specifics.

Mr. Lawzi said that his ministry was holding negotiations with the Israeli government adding that agreement so far has been reached on defining the linkage between the line in Irbid and Haifa in Israel.

With regard to a planned railway line linking Aqaba with Iraq, Mr. Lawzi said that the government would finance the part that runs in Jordanian territory while the Iraqi government would finance the other part running inside Iraqi territory.

Negotiations on technical matters are still under way with the Iraqi government over the route of the projected line and the stations to be built on the way as well as the duration of work on each side so that the connection can take place in time when the two parts have been completed, Mr. Lawzi said.

Mr. Lawzi said that the Jordanian and Syrian governments are discussing agreements on reactivating the line which runs to Damascus.

Ciller seeks coalition without Islamists

ANKARA (AFP) — Former Premier Tansu Ciller insisted on Sunday that Turkey could only overcome its political crisis through a broad-based centrist government excluding the Islamists.

"This crisis can be overcome only if the four centre-right and centre-left parties unite to form a government," Ms. Ciller told reporters.

She was referring to a possible alliance among her True Path Party, acting Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz' right-wing Motherland Party, the Democratic left and the left-leaning Republican People's Party.

Earlier Sunday, Prime Minister-designate Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the pro-Islamic Welfare Party who has been asked to form a new government, said he was seeking a coalition with right-wing parties.

A conservative coalition set up by Mr. Yilmaz and Ms. Ciller in March collapsed last week after a power struggle between the two leaders.

Ms. Ciller ruled out a coalition headed by Mr. Yilmaz, but said her premiership was not important either, implying she would accept a third person as premier.

Asked about a coalition with Welfare, she repeated: "Our alternative is a centrist government."

Bahrain says destabilisation plot targetted its neighbours

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Bahrain's emir said in remarks published on Sunday an alleged pro-Iranian plot to topple his government was also aimed against other countries in the region.

"They wanted to use our country as a passage to the region," Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa said in an interview with Kuwait's Al Siyassah and Arab Times newspapers.

"Sheikh Isa accused Iran of backing a terrorist plot against Bahrain, adding that Iran was planning to use Bahrain as a 'transit' to reach the region," said the paper.

Bahrain said last week it had foiled a plot to topple the government by armed revolution and install a pro-Iranian regime. It withdrew its ambassador from Tehran and downgraded diplomatic relations to the level of charge d'affaires.

Shiite Iran denied meddling in Bahrain, where

members of the island's Shiite majority have waged an 18-month campaign of bombings, arson and sabotage against the government. At least 25 people have died in the unrest.

"Bahrain has been strengthened after the long wave of violence," Sheikh Isa was quoted as saying. "I believe Bahrain has ahead years of guaranteed security and prosperity after the failure of the plotters and after the Bahraini people have realised the magnitude of the plot."

"They realised that those who interfered in their country's internal affairs had an evil plot."

The emir said he was very pleased at the way Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states dealt with the situation. "They exhibited a true nationalist attitude towards our country."

Bahrain is a member of the GCC, a political, economic and military alliance that also groups Saudi Arabia, Qatar,

Oman, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Fellow GCC states cooperated with Bahrain to uncover the plot, Sheikh Isa said.

A Bahrain government official said on Thursday 56 people had so far been arrested in connection with the alleged plot and would stand trial after their confessions were completed.

British Prime Minister John Major has sent a message of support to Bahrain over the plot.

The Gulf News Agency said on Sunday that Mr. Major's message to Sheikh Isa condemned "acts of those instigating unrest in Bahrain and we, in general, condemn all kinds of terrorism."

The Gulf News Agency quoted Mr. Major as saying Iran's "greediness" in the Gulf and its policies over "terrorism" were a source of concern to those wishing to maintain stability in the region.

Jordan, Bahrain to press Syria to answer charges

By Rana Sabbagh

AMMAN — Jordan, Bahrain and other Arab states might press Syria at this month's Arab summit to answer accusations that it backed radical groups on sabotage missions against their governments, Arab diplomats said on Sunday.

The accusations are likely to fuel tension at the June 21-23 summit in Cairo called by Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, his Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak and Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah after two days of talks in Damascus.

The summit is intended to unify deeply-divided Arab ranks in response to Israel's election of Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu whose hardline policies threaten to undermine the Middle East peace process by abandoning the "land-for-peace" strategy

of his predecessor Shimon Peres.

Information Minister Marwan Muasher said after a cabinet meeting that Amman would attend the summit but would demand a clear Arab stand on combating terrorism.

"We want a stand to fight terrorism that seeks to achieve political gains and there has to be a real frank exchange on that. We are the first to press for that if we are to achieve a sincere Arab reconciliation," Dr. Muasher told reporters.

Asked whether Amman would specifically question Syria over its alleged attempts to destabilise Jordan, he said: "Jordan wants an objective and fundamental discussion on this matter and wants a clear (Arab) responsibility on that."

King Hussein said last week Amman had foiled a series of plots over the last year, mostly by Syrian-based groups, to harm Jordan in the wake of its October 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Officials said the saboteurs were mostly members of Damascus-based radical groups who oppose peace with Israel and were caught after infiltrating the border with explosives and machineguns.

Officials said that many told interrogators they belonged to Hizbullah Palestine and Islamic Jihad, members of a radical, 10-member Damascus-based alliance formed after the peace process was launched in 1991.

But they said Syria's Foreign Ministry, informed of all cases, had denied any knowledge about these infiltra-

tions. Arab diplomats told Reuters they believed Jordan, Bahrain and other Gulf Arab states were preparing "documented files" on alleged sabotage attempts involving Syrian-based or pro-Iranian parties with strong links to Damascus, Tehran's main Arab ally.

"The gist of their stand is that Syria can't on the one hand raise an olive branch and say it is for peace in the region and yet at the same time attempt to terrorise groups operating out of its territories against its Arab brethren," one diplomat said.

"It looks like they will be pressing for clear explanations from Syria, and a pledge to stop such acts and policies."

Bahrain on Monday accused Iran of being behind an alleged pro-Tehran plot to

topple its government.

Six suspects who appeared on Bahrain state television confessed to receiving military training in Iran and Lebanon, where Syria is the main power broker with 40,000 troops.

Shiite Iran denied interfering in Bahrain, where members of the majority Shiite Muslim community demanding political and economic reforms, have waged an 18-month campaign of bombings, arson and sabotage against the Sunni-dominated government.

Damascus has long pressed Washington to drop it from a list of countries supporting terrorism.

Its peace talks with Israel remain deadlocked and its ties with Amman have been icy since the Kingdom made peace with Israel without involving Syria.

U.N. team dismantles Iraqi weapons facility

BAGHDAD (R) — A U.N. germ warfare team is dismantling Iraq's main biological weapons site, the Al Hakam, a senior U.N. arms official said on Sunday.

"We are destroying the Al Hakam in the same manner as Muthana (a chemical weapons site) was destroyed," Goran Wallen, director of the ongoing monitoring and verification (OMV) centre in Baghdad, told Reuters.

Under the Gulf war ceasefire terms, Iraq is to be stripped of weapons of mass destruction and the means to produce them.

Mr. Wallen said the scrapping of Al Hakam would rid Iraq of equipment that could enable it engage again in germ warfare.

The site, 80 kilometres south of Baghdad, escaped allied bombing during the 1991 Gulf war that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation of Kuwait.

Iraq had asked the United Nations to spare the 18 square-kilometre site as they wanted to use for the production of single-cell proteins under international monitoring. It also wanted to expand the facility to produce enough animal feed to meet the country's estimated two million tonnes per year need.

Iraq's Information Ministry took foreign reporters on a guided tour of Al Hakam in April 1995. More than 200 Iraqi workers were engaged in the production of pesticides and fertilisers and plans were in the pipeline to construct five more units for animal feed production.

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Mr. Wallen said the destruction process was more than half way through. UNSCOM still needs Iraq to verify that it has destroyed the biological arms it produced from Al Hakam and other sites, Mr. Wallen said.

UNSCOM had Al Hakam under strict surveillance. It built a 56-metre high tower on the site which relayed live pictures from 16 remote monitoring cameras to its OMV centre in Baghdad.

The Gulf war economic embargo on Iraq will remain at least until UNSCOM verifies that all its weapons of mass destruction have been destroyed and its military industries are under close security to prevent them from producing proscribed items.

Last month Iraq accepted U.N. conditions allowing it partial oil exports worth \$2 billion in six months in order to be able to buy food and medicine for its suffering population.

Senior Iraqi officials have said the limited oil sales deal will encourage them to resolve remaining disarmament issues.

The United Nations used the Muthana complex, Iraq's main chemical warfare facility, 130 kilometres northwest of Baghdad, as a dump for chemical arms, estimated at 40,000 bombs, rockets and shells.

Experts check facilities

A team of U.N. technical experts travelled to southern Iraq on Sunday to inspect oil installations ahead of the resumption of Iraqi crude exports, officials said.

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COLUMN 8

Americans, Europeans flock to Gospel Festival

CHICAGO (R) — What do you get when put 1,000 gospel singers in a lakeside park, singing glory to God under a stormy sky? It's the 12th annual Chicago Gospel Festival. For two days at the weekend, 200,000 believers and ooo-believers from the United States and overseas raised their arms above their heads and swayed, clapped, and sang, undaunted by chilly temperatures and the threat of rain.

Americans have recognised the power of gospel for more than 70 years — from the time it first began packing churches in the south, through the 1940s when artists such as Mahalia Jackson and Clara Ward began recording songs, to today, when Gospel's influence can be heard in secular music.

Organisers of this year's festival say the music continues to win fans, especially from overseas. Language proves a thin barrier against the strength of 100 voices singing acappella in seven-part harmony. "They may not all understand the words but Gospel is an art form and they understand the emotion," said Pam Morris, coordinator of the festival and a Gospel radio announcer. Since the festival began 12 years ago, it has grown from a modest domestic event attended by approximately 20,000 people to a concert ten times that size that draws an audience from around the world.

Asthma sufferers seek unusual cure

HYDERABAD, India (R) — Thousands of sufferers seeking a cure for asthma converged on a city in southern India Saturday to swallow live fish stuffed with herbs. The medicinal recipe was concocted 150 years ago by a family in Hyderabad, capital of Andhra Pradesh state, and is administered to asthma sufferers once a year. More than 250 members of the Goud family began distributing wiggling three-inch (eight-cm) murrel fish to patients at 5 a.m. Saturday which marked the first day of the Mrigasira Karma Festival honouring the onset of the annual monsoon. By custom, the remedy is offered for 24 hours. This year several hundred thousand people from all parts of India and many foreign countries were expected to take the medicine at the two dozen counters set up by the Goud family to the old city of Hyderabad. "The miracle fish medicine is our family property and oo ooc can know the formula," Harinath Goud told Reuters. He said a snge had revealed the formula to one of his ancestors, Bathini Veeranna Goud, and asked him to administer the medicine free of cost and only at the family's homestead. The secret medicine, consisting of a yellow herbal paste, is stuffed into the mouth of a live murrel fish, which is then pushed down the throat of the patient.

Miss Philippines stripped of title

MANILA (afp) — The reigning Miss Philippines, Daisy Reyes, has been stripped of her title and the right to compete at Miss World after she made an unauthorised product endorsement, a newspaper reported Sunday. Binibing Pilipinas Charities Inc. sacked the beauty queen Saturday after she ignored a written warning last month to forego